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An analysis of the treatment of the double in the work of Robert Louis Stevenson, Wilkie Collins, and Daphne du Maurier.

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**An Analysis of the Treatment of the Double in the Work of
Robert Louis Stevenson, Wilkie Collins and Daphne du
Maurier.**

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Submitted for the degree of Ph.D., 2000.**

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an investigation of the representation of the double in the fiction of R. L. Stevenson, Wilkie Collins, and Daphne du Maurier, with particular reference to 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde', *The Woman in White*, and *Rebecca*. While these authors are of particular importance to the literature of the double, the significance of certain aspects of their lives cannot be overlooked in this respect, for all are united to some degree by a rejection of the prevailing social order. It is the basis of this rejection, different in each case, that determines the context in which each treats the double.

The present study first locates the origins of the double's representation by these writers as rooted in the Gothic; the main purpose of this is not so much to account for the Gothic conception of the double, but to explore the relevance of the genre's externalisation of inner fears and the psychological life. For, while Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier all clearly employ the double, it is the psychological symbolism enabled by a projection of the fictional inner life through heightened subjectivity that, the present study argues, defines the function of the motif in their work.

This psychological symbolism manifests itself in several themes – namely the representation of landscape, animals, masquerade and writing – central to the main texts, and relating them clearly to one another. This study, then, while contributing on one level to the comparatively sparse literature on Collins and du Maurier, expands an understanding of the motif of the double by filling a gap in existing criticism, demonstrating that it is to no small degree through the relationship of the double to a given set of themes, defined through psychological symbolism, that the course and fulfilment of its function are explained.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Works frequently quoted will be referred to parenthetically in the text as follows. For full details of editions, refer to the Bibliography:

Works by Robert Louis Stevenson:

<i>DB</i>	<i>Deacon Brodie, or The Double Life</i>
<i>Essays</i>	<i>The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson</i>
<i>JH</i>	<i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>
<i>K</i>	<i>Kidnapped</i>
<i>Lantern-Bearers</i>	<i>The Lantern-Bearers and Other Essays</i>
<i>Letters</i>	<i>The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson</i>
<i>MB</i>	<i>The Master of Ballantrae: A Winter's Tale</i>
<i>SSE</i>	<i>Robert Louis Stevenson: The Scottish Stories and Essays</i>
<i>SST</i>	<i>South Sea Tales</i>
<i>TI</i>	<i>Treasure Island</i>
<i>WH</i>	<i>Weir of Hermiston, in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Weir of Hermiston</i>

Works by Wilkie Collins:

<i>A</i>	<i>Armada</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>Basil</i>
<i>DS</i>	<i>The Dead Secret</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>The New Magdalen</i>
<i>NN</i>	<i>No Name</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>The Moonstone</i>
<i>PMF</i>	<i>Poor Miss Finch</i>
<i>WW</i>	<i>The Woman in White</i>

Works by Daphne du Maurier:

<i>BP</i>	<i>The Breaking Point: Eight Stories by Daphne du Maurier</i>
<i>FC</i>	<i>Frenchman's Creek</i>
<i>FF</i>	<i>The Flight of the Falcon</i>
<i>JI</i>	<i>Jamaica Inn</i>
<i>KG</i>	<i>The King's General</i>
<i>MCR</i>	<i>My Cousin Rachel</i>
<i>PJ</i>	<i>The Progress of Julius</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>Rebecca</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>The Scapegoat</i>

Introduction

The present study is an exploration of the motif of the double as it is represented in the writing of three authors – Robert Louis Stevenson, Wilkie Collins, and Daphne du Maurier – whose work is of particular importance to the literature of the double, and furthermore, the thesis charts a development in the function of the motif. Before expanding and explaining this statement, a definition of the term 'double' must be reached. A number of critical studies of the double have deemed it necessary to define the term more closely, for there is little doubt that the expression is a vague one. This is perhaps a purposeful abstraction, for the theme is complex and wide-ranging. For the purposes of the present study, however, the term may be accepted as including both the concept of the *doppelgänger* and that of the divided Self. The first term is generally understood to refer to a second Self taking a physical human form. In the most basic instance, this appears as a figure identical to the primary persona, as seen in Edgar Allan Poe's story 'William Wilson'. The two, however, are not necessarily physically alike, although the narrative leaves no doubt that they are closely connected on some profound level. The tension within this relationship is generated by the simultaneous existence of both connection and opposition. In the case of Stevenson, for example, this condition frequently derives from a sibling relationship that is coupled with both competitiveness and an antithesis of character and appearance. Where the sibling relationship is absent as a uniting element, the bond between the central identities may be alternately signalled through their relationship to someone (*Rebecca* is a good example of this, where the narrator succeeds Rebecca in her role as Maxim's wife and the mistress of Manderley) or something (as seen in *Kidnapped*, where Alan and David are largely defined through their "Scottishness" as Highlander and Lowlander). It is as a result of the tension which

emerges from this "sameness" and "difference" that the narrative role of the double is driven forward.

The divided Self, on the other hand, expresses the presence of these conflicting elements conjoined within a single person. This cannot be considered as being altogether separate from the definition of the *doppelgänger*, for the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, the *doppelgänger* is often the externalised form of this inner conflict, one that has already been in existence for an indeterminate period, and may continue to exist following the appearance of the *doppelgänger*. A good instance is seen in *The Woman in White*, where Laura, while clearly coupled by Collins with her half-sister, also serves to externalise Marian's own inner struggle between Self and propriety. As will be seen, Walter Hartright also functions as Marian's *doppelgänger* in both his shared affection for Laura and his undertaking of travel and adventure. The present study's definition of the double is thus one that will encompass both *doppelgänger* and the single divided identity in expressing a strong common bond between two personas who are yet antithetical in some manner.

It will become clear that, in talking of the representation of landscape in the chosen texts, there is also a parallel and opposition of qualities, one that constitutes a clear duality. This will be seen to operate as a means of reflecting the position of the central identity, and serves to underline and externalise his or her state of (self-) confinement. In itself, however, this duality neither operates as nor constitutes a double as it is defined within this study, and it will therefore be analysed in its relationship *to* the central identity, and not as *part of* it.

In formulating its basis, the present study has drawn on Northrop Frye's theory of the romance narrative as structured around a basic concept of 'descent' and 'ascent' of the

hero or heroine, as explicated in chapters four and five of *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* [1976]. Frye describes four levels of existence – heaven, Eden, that inhabited by humans, and hell – and refers to the movement between these. Since the first two, that is to say the "higher" levels, apply largely to the religious or mythical heroes regarded as divine, the idea of 'descent' and 'ascent' in relation to the present study takes on a more general tone. Frye accordingly defines the romance narrative as constituting a movement to a state of restriction that is eventually succeeded by an escape into a higher state, one of freedom and self-knowledge. Thus

the general theme of descent [...] [is] that of a growing confusion of identity and of restrictions on action. There is a break in consciousness at the beginning, with analogies to falling asleep, followed by a descent to a lower world which is sometimes a world of cruelty and imprisonment, sometimes an oracular cave. In the descent there is a growing isolation and immobility: charms and spells hold one motionless; human beings are turned into subhuman creatures, and made more mechanical in behaviour; hero or heroine are trapped in labyrinths and prisons. The narrative themes and images of ascent are much the same in reverse, and the chief conceptions are those of escape, remembrance, or discovery of one's real identity, growing freedom, and the breaking of enchantment.¹

Importantly, Frye acknowledges that the first narrative stage, that of 'descent', is closely associated with 'the Narcissus or twin image' which may also manifest itself as 'a sinister doppelganger', while the 'ascent' involves a dissociation from the double.² The

¹ (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), p.129.

² p.117.

predominance of this motif in the fiction of Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier³ makes a consideration of Frye's theory in reference to the double highly relevant. Furthermore, such a choice illustrates an interest in how a structural analysis of the theme will relate to narratives whose focus is largely a subjective one. The subsequent assessment of the narrative formulation of 'descent' and 'ascent' in conjunction with this subjectivity gives rise to a need to consider the narratives on two levels, as will be demonstrated. These refer to an objective and a subjective sequence of events, and will be termed *primary* and *secondary* narratives respectively.

These sequences will be traced through a certain scheme. Frye posits that 'descent' is connected with and signalled by various themes. Central among these are the sense of discontinuity, and a form of metamorphosis that involves becoming, or becoming identified with, an animal. The theme of 'ascent', on the other hand, may be achieved through disguise, and is associated with the symbol of fire, as a signal of the progression from darkness to light. The present study will argue that this progression is clearly enacted in the work of Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier (although ultimately unsuccessfully by Stevenson), and is the central function of the motif of the double in their work. The themes through which it is achieved are ones that are in themselves central to the narratives, while also conforming to Frye's hypothesis. This thesis will examine and explicate these narrative progressions in detail, tracing the movement with reference to the themes of landscape, as indicative of a break in consciousness as well as the withdrawing of liberty; animals, as signifiers of a state of restriction; masquerade, or disguise, as a means of attempting an 'ascent'; and fire, as a signifier of renewal. To these

³ As here, all following references to 'du Maurier', unless otherwise indicated, will pertain to Daphne du Maurier.

themes, as outlined by Frye, that of writing will be added as one of great importance in defining and achieving narrative 'ascent' in the texts examined.

William Patrick Day has referred to Frye's idea of 'descent' and 'ascent' in his study of Gothic as a type of romance in *In Circles of Fear and Desire: A Study of Gothic Fantasy* [1985]. Here, he claims that, in the Gothic fantasy, there is no 'ascent' for the protagonist, and hence no recovery of identity.⁴ The present study, while establishing in the opening chapter that the texts central to it belong to the Gothic tradition, will argue that an 'ascent' *is* achieved in the narratives of Collins and du Maurier on both a primary and a secondary narrative level. It will be illustrated that this is achieved at different stages of the narrative in each case, and in a different way, a distinction that will be important to an understanding of the texts. It will furthermore be shown that 'ascent' is achieved on a secondary narrative level through the manner in which the double is related to writing in the text, the latter being a theme strongly identified with the imagination. Thus, while the authors' intentions for the motif of the double become clear as a consequence of its interaction with certain themes, the present study will add to both Frye's and Day's ideas on the subject of 'descent' and 'ascent', as depicted in the romance narrative, by focusing on an additional theme within this context, as well as by identifying the presence of two narrative levels.

While the literary representation of these themes, and most especially perhaps that of landscape, has been widely discussed, none have been dealt with individually within this context, in reference to their interaction with the double. By examining the manner in which these themes relate to the double, and thus tracing the latter's function

⁴ (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), p.7. Day clearly does not intend the term 'Gothic fantasy' to denote only classic Gothic texts. His study accordingly includes a consideration of the work of Edgar Allan Poe and R. L. Stevenson, among others, as well as of the presence of 'Gothic fantasy' in film.

within the chosen narratives, the study of the motif of the double, which has not heretofore been assessed from such a perspective, will be expanded. While adhering to Frye's theory, the present study will furthermore show that Collins and du Maurier subvert the method in which this progression is depicted. By both drawing on and twisting the course of the romance narrative as outlined by Frye, these writers assume a radical position, and bring into focus their own concerns and anxieties, here depicted through the motif of the double.

There have been a number of studies devoted exclusively to an analysis of the double, which approach the topic from a variety of perspectives, ranging from psychoanalytical to historical, anthropological, and literary. While providing a helpful overview of the use of the motif, these have been considered too general for the purposes of this study, focusing as they do not only on different approaches, but also often, in their literary capacity, on an extremely wide variety of texts. They attest, however, to a widespread interest in the motif, originating from a number of academic faculties.

Otto Rank's investigation of the 'problems of man's relation to himself and the fateful disturbance of this relation' in *The Double: A Psychoanalytical Study* [1925], while providing an early study of the motif, limits itself to a psychoanalytical angle, referring largely to the presentation of the double as a literal "shadow", and as a being independent of the central identity.⁵ This investigation, far more expansive in nature than the present study, also refers to a different group of writers. While not approaching the subject from any single analytical viewpoint, the present study does not consider, as Rank's does, that the displacement of guilt onto the Other is the central function of the double, something which will be illustrated in the discussion of those texts with which

this thesis is concerned. Rank does, however, note the relevance of the author's life to the representation of the double. Referring to Wilde, Heine, Maupassant, and Poe, he claims that all 'were decidedly pathological personalities who, in more than one direction, went beyond the limit of neurotic conduct otherwise allowed to the artist', and that they were also prey to 'psychic disturbances or neurological and mental illnesses, and during their lifetime they demonstrated a marked eccentricity in behavior.'⁶ Despite the perhaps exaggerated interpretation, this is a relevant aspect of the literature of the double, and it will become clear that, while neither 'pathological', 'neurotic', or mentally ill, the three authors central to this study may indeed all have been deemed 'eccentric'. This is a significant point, for their eccentricity was symptomatic of a rejection of certain social values, and functioned as an expression of this active difference and refusal to conform. The in-depth exploration of these aspects of their lives is therefore an important contribution to the literature of the double, for it determines not only the probable source of the double in the literature of Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier, but also elucidates that which they attempt to achieve through the motif.

Ralph Tymms' approach to analysing the double in *Doubles in Literary Psychology* [1949] is both psychologically and anthropologically oriented, and he recounts tales from various cultures that deal with the double as spiritual Other. His study is more clearly set out than Rank's, moving from the importance of German romanticism to the motif, to post-romantic and late nineteenth century scientific and ethical repercussions on the theme.

⁵ Translated and edited with an introduction by Harry Tucker, Jr. (London: H. Karnac, 1989), p.7.

⁶ p.35.

In *The Divided Self: A Perspective on the Literature of the Victorians* [1969], Masao Miyoshi explores the theme of dividedness in the work of 'Victorian men of letters'.⁷ While refusing a narrow definition of the 'divided Self', he draws three categories of dividedness, namely 'formal', one that shows 'the breakdown of unity' in the author's work; 'thematical or ideological', which includes the double by duplication or self-division; and 'biographical', which deals with the importance of the author's own so-called double life.⁸ He charts a chronological overview of the theme through the literature of the 1900's, taking the Gothic male villain's split identity as an onrunning idea in this literature.

A Freudian perspective is taken by Robert Rogers in *A Psychoanalytical Study of the Double in Literature* [1970], in which the author's split psyche is viewed as the basis for the presence of the double in his or her fiction. This remains, however, a largely psychoanalytical investigation using literary examples to support already formulated hypotheses. Literature is consequently a secondary aspect within this scheme, while literary interpretation is altogether avoided.

C. F. Keppler's *The Literature of the Second Self* [1972] centres around the question of defining the double – or as he prefers to call it, the second self – as it appears in the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The study is accordingly divided into chapters that consider the literary presence of the second self as twin brother, pursuer, tempter, vision of horror, saviour, the beloved, and, finally, the second self in time. Keppler's purpose is not interpretative, however, but an attempt at 'understanding

⁷ (New York: New York University Press, 1969), preface, p.ix.

⁸ Preface, pp.x-xi.

what [the second self] is and of becoming familiar with him in his different forms', something he does by giving numerous literary examples of the second self for each instance.⁹

H. M. Daleski, in *The Divided Heroine: A Recurrent Pattern in Six English Novels* [1984], examines the theme of the divided female protagonist in a selection of texts – *Wuthering Heights*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *The White Peacock*, and *The End of the Affair*. Her study is based on the concept of a heroine torn between two lovers who finally experiences dis-integration, usually concluding in her death.

Also moving away both from the male-male double and the male-authored text, Joanne Blum deals with an alternative form of pairing in *Transcending Gender: The Male/Female Double in Women's Fiction* [1988], in which she explores the theme indicated in the title as it appears in a number of novels, as well as in science fiction. She concludes that this male/female pairing may illustrate a transcendence of the gender divide, and that, by resulting in wholeness, gender difference within this theme can be constructive.

Paul Coates' study, *The Double and the Other: Identity as Ideology in Post-Romantic Fiction* [1988], provides a broad analysis of the double and related topics. Within this, a special emphasis is placed on the fiction originating from central Europe, and in particular that of Joseph Conrad. Coates thus considers 'the foreign culture' a main

⁹ (Tucson, Arizona: The University of America Press, 1972), p.182.

ingredient in the formulation of the fiction of the double in 'providing a space in which to live a secret, sacred life'.¹⁰

John Herdmann's assessment of the literature of the double in *The Double in Nineteenth-Century Fiction* [1990] also covers a wide spectrum, examining the themes of romanticism as a background to the subject, Christianity and the duality of body and soul, the Gothic, and mesmerism.

By far the most detailed literary treatments of the motif of the double are to be found in Karl Miller's examination of the subject in *Doubles: Studies in Literary History* [1985], and Astrid Schmid's book, *The Fear of the Other: Approaches to the English Story of the Double (1764-1910)* [1996]. The first of these is ambitious in presenting a deeper consideration of the development of the theme, yet is necessarily diverse through its need to assess many of the major literary works dealing with the subject from romanticism to the present. Although Miller, like the other critics mentioned here, does not explore the work of either Collins or du Maurier, he introduces an idea that is developed and expanded in the present study. Relating the double to the figure of the orphan in its liminal state, he argues that the latter's 'favourite activity [... is] flight, and the word itself hovers between the activities of flying – in the sense of triumph or transcendence – and fleeing'.¹¹ The concept of flying/fleeing is regarded in the light of a representation of *physical* journeying within the text. While the protagonist(s) of each of the primary texts within the present study is/are orphaned, however, the 'flight' is more

¹⁰ (London: The Macmillan Press, 1988), p.3.

¹¹ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.48.

often one of the imagination. It is in the double's capacity to enable this that its presence is given meaning, as will be illustrated.

Astrid Schmid's study of the double grounds the theme as it is used in nineteenth and early twentieth century literature in the Gothic tradition. She focuses on the split identity of the Gothic villain as the prototype for these later instances, arguing that this contributes to an understanding of the motif in the later literature. Stressing that this prototype served to 'actualize the issues of split identity, male paranoia, self-deception, and guilt', she proceeds to examine later texts in the light of these aspects, with the ultimate aim of showing

how under the guise of the double, the subject matter of the 'unspeakable', i.e. those socially condemned areas of forbidden (homo-) sexual desire, repeatedly forces its way into literature. At the same time, it is possible to show how closely the motif of the double in general linked with deeply rooted fears and with the aura of the sinister or the uncanny.¹²

Her approaches to these texts fall into the categories of socio-psychological, psychoanalytical, psychiatric, and existential-philosophical, and serve to highlight the presence of homophobic fears, the Second Self as a part of the First Self, and the presence of the 'demonic' in the *doppelgänger*.¹³ It is the *emotions ensuing from* the relationship of the First Self to his Other that are central to this study, with the aim of expanding the perception of the relation between good and evil in this context.

Whereas Schmid limits herself to looking at male doubles, and, in covering sixteen literary texts, is inevitably unable to investigate any of them in great depth, the

¹² (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996), pp.240, 15.

present study will examine the treatment of the female as double, one that has been neglected, while also presenting a more thorough assessment of the chosen works. Schmid does indeed include 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' among her selection, yet this is strictly within a context of the homophobia that is arguably present in the text. There are therefore significant differences in our treatment of the theme, for while Schmid concentrates on the element of taboo involved in the literature of the double, the present study will argue that the motif focuses instead on a movement to a state beyond social and personal restriction, one that is informed by the lives and personalities of the authors themselves. Although a post-Freudian view will necessarily involve psychoanalytic judgements, this study does not consider an in-depth psychoanalytic analysis necessary to an understanding of the relation between the author and his or her work as it relates to this argument. While Schmid furthermore concludes that the two selves of the double 'fail[] to achieve selfhood by entering a mature, heterosexual relationship',¹⁴ it will be seen that a 'selfhood', that is to say, a sense of wholeness of the central identity, *does* in fact ensue in the fiction of Collins and du Maurier, and is furthermore unrelated in these texts to any concept of sexual relations.

In following its course of investigation, it is evident that the present study has drawn on some specific points made in studies of the double. Rank's recognition of the 'eccentricity' of authors whose work centres around a representation of the double is an idea which is implicated in the present study's explanation of the authors' rejection of the social order. Miller's theory of the 'flight' of the orphan as double has also been incorporated into Frye's idea of 'ascent' as a basis for considering the protagonist's progression from a state of imprisonment to one of liberation. This liberation may

¹³ p.240.

¹⁴ p.240.

furthermore be related to Clifford Hallam's categorisation of the double as 'Incomplete Self' seeking 'integration'.¹⁵ Although our conclusions in this respect are different, the concept of wholeness is one that is closely related to the idea of liberation explored in the present study as the objective of the double, for both imply development signalled by a state of self-knowledge and self-consciousness. It will therefore be seen that, while Frye's description of 'ascent' refers to a movement away from restriction, it is also closely linked to the acquisition of integration and wholeness.

It is clear that, while Stevenson is almost always included in any analysis of the literature of the double, neither Collins' nor du Maurier's contributions in this area have been considered central to a study of the subject. While broadening this conception by their inclusion here, the present study also relates itself to existing criticism. Stevenson's representation of Miller's concept of 'flight' as a *physical* journey is recognised as being one of the aspects that sets him apart from Collins and du Maurier, for it affirms the fact that his treatment of the subject is grounded more solidly within the accepted tradition of the literature of the double. In this respect, the fiction of Collins and du Maurier is important, for it expands this particular aspect of the double's role, breaking new ground by drawing on a number of literary themes –including the imprisoned Gothic heroine and the tradition of the Lady of Shalott – to portray a transcendence of social and personal confinement through an imaginary inner life, one that is actualized in the motif of the double. While their narratives conform, therefore, to Frye's theory of 'descent' and 'ascent', Stevenson's by and large fail to complete this progression. Accordingly, the chapter on Stevenson has been placed first, overriding chronological order in favour of

¹⁵ 'The Double as Incomplete Self: Toward a Definition of Doppelgänger', in *Fearful Symmetry: Doubling in Literature and Film*, Papers from the Fifth Annual Florida State University Conference on Literature and

the order of literary tradition, as well as in acceptance of his failure to conform to the full course of the romance narrative structure as outlined by Frye. Both of these factors set Stevenson apart from an analysis that accepts this as its foundation, and affirm his position as a writer who adheres to an older and formulaic literary heritage. The position of the second chapter is hence indicative of this fact, and provides a clearer perspective of the development of the double motif as signalled by the fiction of Collins and du Maurier.

Stevenson does indeed incorporate many of the themes that Frye connects with the double, however, yet these are not developed as fully by him. Despite the fact that, like the other two writers, Stevenson relies heavily on the Gothic in his representation of the double, it will become evident that he also draws upon a religious tradition in this capacity. It is his inability to move sufficiently away from this latter that prevents the full 'flight' of the double, and relates the other two writers more closely to each other in their treatment of the subject. A reasonably detailed examination of Stevenson's contribution in this respect nevertheless facilitates an understanding of the following texts, not only through a comparison of the treatment of this particular aspect, but also because the *development* of the double *towards* a sense of integration through 'flight' – or 'ascent' – although never realised in Stevenson's work, is represented by the same or similar means. The chapter on Stevenson has nevertheless not been divided into the same sub-sections that make up the succeeding two chapters. This would have confused the progression which the present study has attempted to outline by referring to specific themes in their relation to the double, for in Stevenson's writing these are so closely interconnected that to separate them would defeat, or at the very least obscure, the objective of the chapter, as well as necessitating frequent repetition.

The opening chapter of this study divides the influences on Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier into two areas: the religious, and the romantic/Gothic. In sketching this outline, it has not been deemed necessary to go into great detail, and only those aspects strictly relevant to the present study have been drawn out. This decision has been further determined by the presence of an extensive amount of criticism centred around these areas. Although the religious background is only relevant to an approach to Stevenson's treatment of the double, it is not a connection that has been made before in such specificity, yet is, as will be argued, crucial to an understanding not only of the treatment of the double, but also of the narrative failure to realise the double's objective as outlined by the present study. The Gothic is of course a direct influence on all three writers, and as such must be mentioned. In doing so, this thesis has concentrated not on the motif of the *doppelgänger* or the self-divided identity *per se* (the latter an aspect already covered by Schmid's book), but has focused instead on the importance of the Gothic's externalisation of the inner life. It is this that forms the foundation of the present study's hypothesis on subjectivity and psychological symbolism as used by Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier, and that enables a consideration of the relevant themes (such as landscape or writing) in a manner removed from a realist mode.

The second chapter deals with works by Stevenson in which the double plays an important role. Although the initial objective of the present study had been to illustrate a similar treatment and functioning of the double in the work of the three authors in relation to Frye's theory of 'descent' and 'ascent', it has become evident that Stevenson – although falling chronologically between Collins and du Maurier, and thus being an obvious choice in contributing to the literature of the double which draws on the Gothic – should be placed first. As a result of his literary reliance on the religious scheme, the

objective of the double as outlined by Frye never reaches fruition, and as such the theme of writing is only cursorily treated from the point of view of this thesis. Although the other themes relevant to the double within this context are indeed present, they too operate in a less distinct manner, forming a conglomeration rather than a clear progression. This has resulted in a decision to avoid the thematical layout that makes up the two succeeding chapters, for this would, as already mentioned, detract from an understanding of the argument. The work of Stevenson has therefore finally assumed a less central position within this thesis than at first intended, not because his treatment of the double is less obvious or less important, but because it disqualifies itself for certain reasons from the present argument. Despite this fact, its inclusion is important in clarifying the function of the motif by explaining *why* this failure takes place, and in establishing by contrast the radical nature of both Collins' and du Maurier's treatment of the subject. In addition, the chapter contributes to an area in Stevenson criticism which is lacking, namely a direct and profound assessment of the function of the double in conjunction with a consideration of relevant factors in the author's life. The significance of Stevenson's relationship with his father is an aspect that the author's biographers have drawn attention to,¹⁶ and the patriarchal structure is indeed essential to an understanding of the motif, a fact that is consequently highlighted here. The relation between the adventure stories, the Scottish tales, the tales of superstition, and the city-bound narratives is also clarified in this respect, for the pivotal position of the patriarch and all that he represents, while manifesting itself in different ways, remains, as will be argued, stable.

¹⁶ Frank McLynn's *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1993) devotes a chapter entitled 'Patriarch' to this issue, in which its author claims that it is 'quite clear that one of the seeds of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* was observation of the Janus face of Thomas Stevenson' (p.64).

The third and fourth chapters deal with the writing of Wilkie Collins and Daphne du Maurier respectively. The structure of the two chapters is similar, with the aim of drawing a clear parallel between the treatment of the motif by the two authors, and its role in charting a movement from 'descent' to 'ascent' in relation to the two narrative levels that will be identified. Despite this, a focus has been placed on those aspects in the life of each which have been most important in formulating their representation of the double. This has required the inclusion of an additional section in the fourth chapter on 'phantasying' with reference to Freud, as a necessary factor in explicating du Maurier's intentions through her representation of the double. The two chapters trace a course of development of the motif, using and expanding Frye's theory, that enables a new interpretation of the narratives. It is the intention of the present study to show the close parallels between Collins' and du Maurier's treatment of the double through this, uniting two otherwise different writers, for both subvert the romance narrative structure as defined by Frye in similar ways to underline their individual concerns. While casting new light onto the treatment and function of the double in their work, these chapters also explore the writing of two authors whose fiction has only recently attracted academic attention. In this respect, the present study is a contribution to an area of literary criticism that is still developing.

Studies on the individual authors have been helpful to varying degrees in this investigation. While criticism on Stevenson is certainly not lacking, none has given specific attention to any great degree to the relation between the author's own trauma concerning his father and religion, and the representation of the double as effecting a literal journey into a region of idealised freedom from social restriction. It will be argued that political, historical and social narrative issues emanate from and rely on this specific

area of the author's personal life, and that, furthermore, it is this that predetermines the failure of the motif as it is examined here. Although specialized areas of information have been helpful, none have referred to this topic at any length, and no single piece of criticism has consequently been outstandingly beneficial. Instead, the author's own correspondence and essays have been relied upon to a far greater extent as aids to shedding light on the meaning behind his fiction in the context of the present study.

Criticism of Collins' work has recently grown, yet, understandably, much of this centres around the form and structure of plot, as well as on more general critical issues. Of more particular help to this study's chapter on Collins has been Tamar Heller's *Dead Secrets: Wilkie Collins and the Female Gothic*, a sensitive reading of Collins' fiction which appreciates the importance of the theme of writing therein. This is approached, however, with the purpose of demonstrating how writing reinforces male power in the texts, while women's writing is seen, in the Gothic tradition, as remaining "buried". The latter stages of the present argument will aim to show that, on the contrary, the central female identities do achieve power and liberation through their writing. Sue Lonoff's *Wilkie Collins and his Victorian Reader: A Study in the Rhetoric of Authorship* is also a study that makes many discerning points, especially in relation to *The Moonstone*.

Despite the clear absence of a range of literary criticism aimed at Daphne du Maurier's work, Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik's *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* has been of great value. Published in 1998, this book appeared two years after the start of this thesis, and does in fact cover some of the same ground in recognizing the author's life and identity – as explored in Margaret Forster's biography – as being issues central to her fiction. The parallel approaches stemming from this support the fact that there is largely only one way in which to examine du Maurier's fiction as it relates to her life. Placing du Maurier in the tradition of the 'Female Gothic'

as outlined by Ellen Moers (*Literary Women* [1976]), Horner and Zlosnik describe three phases that the author covers within this tradition. These are a search for 'authenticity' and the 'true' Self through family and place; authorship and writing as an empowering activity, both for du Maurier and in *Rebecca*; and the experimentation with identities through male narrators; additionally, the importance of the mother-figure is highlighted.¹⁷ The book establishes du Maurier's position within the Gothic tradition, something which the present study has thus not elaborated upon. While family and the negative representation of the mother-figure are not areas that will be central to the present argument, the two studies converge in their acceptance of landscape as reflective of divisions within the Self. Ideas on writing and masquerade in *Rebecca*, while sharing the same basis, vary in covering different areas (Horner and Zlosnik found their thoughts on masquerade on Luce Irigaray's concept of the theme, for example). Despite the similarities between the two approaches, therefore, the present study, while contributing much to the ideas presented in Horner and Zlosnik's criticism, also appropriates these themes in a clear argument illustrating a movement from restriction to liberation for the protagonist, as presented through the device of the double, and as outlined by Northrop Frye.

The present study, then, aims to fill a gap in both the existing criticism concerned with the double, and that concerned with the fiction of Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier, by illustrating the belief that the motif of the double is an interactive device whose function can be traced through an examination of the manner in which it relates to certain themes within the narrative. Through such an assessment, two narrative levels will be identified. These *primary* and *secondary* narrative levels will reveal differing

¹⁷ (London: Macmillan Press, 1998), p.25.

views of narrative events. The conventional notions of the function of the motif of the double are thus clearly expanded through such an investigation, which exposes a new understanding of the narrative, the narrative structure, and the development of the central identity.

Chapter 1: Influential Literary Backgrounds

The literary preoccupation with the idea of duality is one that has been present through the ages, as any study of the motif of the double must acknowledge. While Ralph Tymms discusses the relevance of the theme to 'primitive religious and ethical beliefs', it is only necessary for the purposes of this study to examine certain areas for which the motif has been of some importance.¹⁸ Through such a selection, it will be possible to chart a line of influence and development concerning the subject. The application of the ideas that are drawn out in consequence may then aid a reading of the motif in the work of R. L. Stevenson, Wilkie Collins, and Daphne du Maurier. The diversity of this subject's history means that only such aspects as may be relevant to this end will be examined, and even then only to the extent whereby certain points may be ascertained, and a brief understanding of the relevant historical usage of the motif gained.

1.1 Religious: the Hero and Sibling Relations in the Old Testament

The need for a sense of unity, of singleness, is one that appears to be largely inherent in our perception of heroism, and is depicted not only in folklore but also in myth, for instance in *The Odyssey*, and in much Shakespearean literature, as well as in the modern popular portrayal of the super-hero. The central figure is defined through differentiation in this respect, being often immediately recognisable, a fact that has become an inherent part of its appeal. Whereas the antagonist in these cases is generally a polar opposite in every way, the double is part of the Self, and is invested at the same time with the characteristic of sameness that is such a central feature of the biblical and mythical representation of brothers; the double is thus both same and Other.

The significance of the idea of duality is essential to Christian religious thought, to which the distinction between corporeal and spiritual life is fundamental. The polarity inherent in the bifurcation of man into body and soul subsequently develops into a focus on the incongruity of this union. The interpretation of this as an internal conflict is nowhere so clearly expressed in the Bible as by St. Paul, when he writes of 'a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members'.¹⁹ The Old Testament, however, presents this struggle in a different manner, namely by the presence of numerous pairs of brothers, and the disharmonious relationship that almost invariably exists between them. The parallel to New Testament thought in this respect is clearest in the relations between the first set of brothers, Cain and Abel, for in murdering his brother, Cain could be said to have divorced himself from the better side of his character. It is this instance of the fraternal relationship that constitutes a prototype for subsequent representations of brotherhood in the Bible, in addition to being the most extreme example of this form of conflict. Brotherhood is employed as an effective representative of division as well as of unity, neither of which may be denied. The fractal nature of this relationship, and the fact that each persona is described only through his relationship to his brother, removes the possibility of a wholeness of the Self. A consideration of this theme from a religious perspective is particularly relevant to the work of R. L. Stevenson, whose adherence to the tradition accordingly explains the narrative inability to achieve wholeness in his fiction. In such a case, murder may be an attempt at accomplishing this, yet it is also in a sense a murder of the Self.

¹⁸ *Doubles in Literary Psychology* (Cambridge: Bowes & Bowes, 1949), p.16.

¹⁹ Romans 7. 23.

The mythological parallel of Romulus and Remus conforms to this fraternal formula, where the foundation of a city is likewise related to the murder of a brother. The tension between the brothers is described through this idea, for the separation of the twins echoes the reading of Cain as 'the representative of the earthly city and Abel of the heavenly city' in Augustine's *City of God*.²⁰ In the case of the biblical brothers, however, the city grows to symbolise a deeper schism, for 'Cain is the progenitor of sophistical reasoning, and as such he has a direct connection with the foundation of cities (centers of sophistication) and with those supreme figures of humankind's overweeningness, Nimrod and the Tower of Babel'.²¹ In addition, the close tie between the city and original violence in the Bible, and again in the legend of the foundation of Rome, suggests an intricate association between violence and the city, and both are represented within the context of the double. The narrative claustrophobia evident in those of Stevenson's works set in Edinburgh is accordingly coupled with violence, both in the context of identity and of the double. The contradictions implicit in an act of violence which must sever part of the Self from the Self in order to achieve singleness will become a significant aspect of the motif of the double in the nineteenth century, where it often manifests itself as suicide. The implications of rebirth in the biblical murder, where Abel's death bears a likeness to Christ's, thus transmutes into an act of annihilation in this later literature, reflecting the "death of God" that accompanied it.

There are countless other instances of fraternal competition in the Bible, where the focus rests on the fates of only two brothers, even when there are more. The struggle for some form of supremacy which runs through these histories is invariably one founded on the acquisition of status within a patriarchal system. The description of the births of

²⁰ Quinones, Ricardo J., *The Changes of Cain: Violence and the Lost Brother in Cain and Abel Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p.35.

Jacob and Esau, and of Zerah and Perez, two sets of twins, are both founded on intimations of contention. Thus Jacob is born clutching Esau's heel, while his grandchildren, Zerah and Perez, are both the first-born: 'one put out a hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out'.²² The fact that the pair are not mentioned again after this, and that the relationship remains undeveloped as a theme through adulthood, suggests that such episodes are described merely to define the nature of the fraternal – and within this the twin – relationship as one based upon conflict.

Although the struggle at birth may at first be read as an eagerness to be the first-born – a theme made incontrovertibly relevant by the description of the birth of twins – primogeniture, as Frederick Greenspahn has shown, was not of primary importance, for the father would often choose which of his sons was to be the preferred "first-born", or *bekor*.²³ It is the blessing that marks this choice which is thus often the object of conflict among two brothers, as several histories in the Bible bear out. It is therefore *because* the recipient of the *bekor* is undetermined by age that competition exists. It is this, in fact, that lies at the centre of many episodes of this kind. Jacob, for instance, practices deceit in order to steal the blessing belonging to Esau, his brother. Isaac's blindness aids the accomplishment of the deception, and it is Jacob whose history is consequently traced by the biblical narrative. It is made clear that, despite the blessing later bestowed upon Esau, this first cannot be recalled or canceled, and it is Jacob who subsequently assumes a role in Israel's history as one determined by God.

²¹ Ibid, p.28.

²² Genesis 38. 28-29.

²³ *When Brothers Dwell Together: The Preeminence of Younger Siblings in the Hebrew Bible* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

The part that God plays in this outcome has already been affirmed by the conception of the twins, for Rebecca, their mother, had been barren. It is only through God's intervention that Rebecca is able to conceive, and the divine prediction that 'Two nations are in thy womb;/ And two peoples shall be separated even from thy bowels:/ And the one people shall be stronger than the other people;/ And the elder shall serve the younger' does indeed come to pass.²⁴ Rebecca's preference for Jacob, the younger son, is perhaps explained by the prediction given to her of his success, and her subsequent assistance in obtaining the *bekor* is essential. Nor is this the only instance in which a figure of historical significance is born through divine intervention: Samuel is also conceived by a barren mother. In this sense, it is of interest that the representation of female pairings in the Bible is almost always one based on a comparison, or even rivalry, where child-bearing is concerned. Here it is not always relevant that the two women should be sisters, for the doubling is achieved solely upon the basis of reproduction. Greenspahn observes that there are only two instances of female doubling in this way that are of any import, and even then, the course and context of the two narratives is peripheral to a central male one; thus Rachel and Leah echo Jacob's relation with Esau, and Michal and Merab epitomize the conflict between David and Saul.²⁵

While the first-born son has been shown not to receive automatic rights to the *bekor*, or blessing, the stories depicting fraternal conflict exhibit a consistent trend towards placing the younger son in a triumphant position. Hence Jacob's machinations elicit the first blessing, while, as Greenspahn notes, Isaac, David, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, and Solomon are all younger than their rivals. Even Abel could be said to fall within this category, for, although the result is his murder, it is his offering that finds

²⁴ Genesis 25. 23.

²⁵ Greenspahn, p.7.

favour in God's eyes, and it is consequently he that is preferred of the two brothers. This tendency operates as an opposer to the widespread cultural veneration of the eldest offspring – one apparent, for instance, in Greek myth – and is remarkable through the very subversion of traditional expectation. The choice of the younger as the recipient of favour, firstly through the blessing, and thereafter through the fate that this opens up before him, determines his position as one designated by God, and is one that is frequently foretold. Interestingly, fate is a dominant feature of much modern literature of the double, displacing providence as the force controlling the course of the narrative. The departure from both religion and the nucleus of a patriarchal order are therefore implicit in this shift.

It is through the choice of one and the implied designation of the other as unfit for the receipt of the father's most special of blessings that divine prophecy comes to fruition. The relevance of this motif is one that carries wide significance, for it allows the younger son to carry on the father's line. In this way, the central line of descent is sanctioned by God, and the youth of its bearer functions as a signal of its longevity as well as its continuance. Thus '[b]eing favored with the blessing – a theological category rather than a legal one – means being an ancestor of Israel, making the line through which the people traced their descent and justifying the thread of the biblical account'.²⁶ This is even relevant to the hero-cult of the Greeks, where the uniting of divinity with mortality 'stood for a denial of the view which Homeric society sought to impose, that the dead were deprived of all strength and wit'.²⁷ In biblical terms, however, this becomes a means whereby the fathers may live on through their chosen successors. The predominance of the younger son in the Bible also assigns a sense of the Other to the

²⁶ Ibid, p.56.

²⁷ Guthrie, W. K. C., *The Greeks and Their Gods* (London: Methuen, 1962), p.239.

theme, where the unexpected is brought to the fore, an idea that is developed in the literature of the double. Emphasising this aspect, several of these inheritors of their fathers' powers are feminine by implication; whereas Esau is covered in thick hair and is a hunter, his brother is a shepherd whose smooth skin and complexion render him the antithesis of his sibling. It is David who however affirms the dominance of this idea, for, also a shepherd, he is disregarded among Jesse's sons as a result of his diminutive stature and the innocence of his youth. It is his very physical inadequacy in terms of expectation for a king and hero that is used to secure his status in his victory over Goliath, where the defeat of the latter is achieved and rendered extraordinary through the subversion of those very qualities of physical weakness.

As mentioned, the divinity associated with (male) figures of primary religious historical importance through the theme of miraculous conception or divine prophecy also finds a parallel in the Greek myths, where heroes are attributed with divine status. Twinship is also a predominant theme in this respect. The best known among these are the Dioscuri – Castor and Polydeuces, or Pollux – whose close and harmonious relationship is interrupted by Castor's death. The inability to live apart is reflected in the continuance of life in the heavens, where the pair finally attain immortality as a constellation. Their temporary separation underlines the disparity of their parentage, for each was conceived of a different father by Leda in one night. Pollux's divine origin as the son of Zeus is paralleled elsewhere. Poseidon also fathers twins, Aiolos and Boiotos, Kteatos and Eurytos, and Neleus and Pelias, as does Hermes, whose twin sons are Echion and Erytos. The frequency with which twins appear in the Greek myths is in addition often coupled with heroism. The most distinctive instance is that of Herakles/Hercules, whose twin, Iphikles, is little heard of, and, as opposed to his brother, who was fathered by Zeus, is mortal. The divine assistance in the conception of many biblical figures of

importance is thus paralleled by the godliness attributed to the heroes of the Greeks. That both should go on to shape the history of their nation is explained by this fact.

Struggle between brothers is not a central feature of fraternal relationships in the myths, however, and this is coupled with the absence of any significant interaction with the father. In the Bible, conversely, the identity and indeed fate of the brothers is frequently determined by the father's choice of *bekor*, a choice which is often arbitrary as well as unjustified. Isaac's preference of Esau is not satisfactorily explained. Similarly, Jacob chooses to place his first blessing on Ephraim and not Manasseh, and does so by crossing his hands before laying them on his grandsons' heads, reserving his right hand for the younger. These choices accomplish the divine prophecy usually given concerning one brother, rendering the father and the *bekora* merely vessels of God's wish. The fraternal contention is therefore clearly one based around a patriarchal centre, and is one that leads directly to murderous thoughts in several cases, where the removal of competition and comparison may be read as an attempt to succeed to the father's blessing. Thus Esau contemplates murdering Jacob, and Joseph's brothers think of killing him, while Abimelech, Absalom, Solomon and Jehoram all kill their brothers.²⁸ The first and primary instance of this, however, is of course that of Cain and Abel. Rivalry for preference also constitutes a main element here, as does the arbitrariness of choice. The differentiation of Cain and Abel as farmer and shepherd is one that is repeated in other fraternal narratives, and one that is thought by some theologians to be the source of defining these conflicts.

The patriarchal centre of these narratives is one that is taken up by R. L. Stevenson, whose religious upbringing determined this influence upon his work. His altered religious views later on in life would however cast a negative, restrictive

connotation to this social order, which nevertheless remained inextricable from the author's love for Scotland, and consequently inescapable. The fact that the double operates within this context in his fiction therefore imposes limitations on its function for the present study, as will be shown, and results in the inability to accomplish a satisfactory narrative 'ascent'.

The gradual alteration in perception of the Cain-Abel story over the ages is one that constitutes the basis of Quinones' study of the subject, and is a significant one. Whereas the classical Christian era, he observes, regarded Abel as the sympathetic figure, this role became Cain's in the romantic and post-romantic eras. What he calls 'the critical moment of emergence for Cain-Abel as a theme of significance and extensiveness' occurred with the interpretation of the theme by both Philo and Augustine, who brought it to the forefront through their works.²⁹ The association of positive and negative qualities to the brothers places them as polar opposites, and Cain thus becomes the progenitor of man's evil in the world. This was certainly a factor contributing to the connection of Cain with the racial Other, whether black or Jewish, an idea that becomes marked in later literature of the double. Like him, Esau and Ishmael are also cast out of the patriarchal arena, and must establish themselves elsewhere. Indeed, Esau also exhibits the external signs of social alienation, being described as red and hairy, the latter quality being the very means appropriated by his brother to steal Esau's blessing when he covers himself in a goatskin before his blind father. Roger Syrén draws a parallel between this characteristic of social alienation and alienation on a national level when Esau is established, propagates, and is henceforth associated with Edom. Thus, 'Jacob and Esau have become prototypical objects for God's love and God's hatred in a way that

²⁸ Greenspahn, p.111.

²⁹ Quinones, p.23.

cannot be explained by their individual roles in Genesis, but which becomes explicable in the light of Edom's role in the Babylonian conquest', where it participates in the attack on Judah, and is subsequently cursed by God.³⁰

The incorporation of geographical, national, racial, and moral, as well as individual Others into the figures not only of Cain, but also, albeit to a varying extent, into the other "unchosen" brothers, is significant. Through this, the acceptable and approved – even if this has been connected with or obtained through deceit – is established as indigenous to the realm of the father. That this should be the unchallenged interpretation of the theme during the classical Christian era is therefore unsurprising, and clear polar opposition remains a central feature of the motif. The figure of Cain as Other is developed during the Middle Ages, when he assumes the characteristics of monstrosity, and it is only with the Renaissance that a shift begins to take place, as more attention is given to the feelings and emotions of the literary protagonist, including the anti-hero, and a clear emphasis is placed on the interior life as well as the exterior one. Quinones focuses on Byron's *Cain* as a marker of the reversal of sympathies from Abel to Cain, which may indeed be read as a manifestation of the effects of the revolutionary nature of this era, which looked more profoundly into man's nature and the nature of existence itself.

The social and scientific advancement of the nineteenth century awakened a need for a sense of man's wholeness, one that is apparent in the abundance of doubles in the literature of this period. The search for a resolution to this fragmented state – a state heightened by the religious upheavals that were taking place and shattering the age-old foundations of social life and thought – emerge through the self-questioning mode of the

³⁰ *The Forsaken First-Born: A Study of a Recurrent Motif in the Patriarchal Narratives* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), p.113.

period. The present study proposes that the fundamental role of the patriarch in separating the two facets of the Self and banishing one, as has been illustrated not only in the Cain-Abel narrative but in numerous other fraternal histories, faced a dissolution concomitant with the "death of God". As a result, the Other returns to haunt the Self, giving rise to the desire for self-integration and a sense of inner unity. The figure of the patriarch, as will be illustrated in the analyses of the works central to this study, therefore assumes a negative influence on the life and inner development of the protagonist in this respect, an aspect that is especially clear in the writing of Stevenson. The patriarchal figure is one whose authority is questioned by these narratives, which attempt to break free from his world in order to accomplish integration and wholeness.

The relevance of the Cain-Abel coupling is consequently highly relevant to the search for *identity*, and as such, the literary motif of the double signifies not only the protagonist's lack of wholeness, but presents him with the opportunity to examine the nature of this bifurcation by allowing him to interact with his double as Other. The use of the identical double merely accentuates the aspect of self-examination inherent in the theme. Consequently, it is the figure of Cain that is pertinent to this notion, for the narrative has come to represent a drama 'between a questioning, dissatisfied, probing critical intelligence, keenly aware of division and somehow in search of a better order, and a non-aspirant Abel, who by virtue of some personal accommodation or by simple resignation is more accepting of the contradictions of life'.³¹ Cain is therefore the figure whose characteristics, and that which he has grown to symbolise, are more drawn upon in a literary context. His challenge of *the* patriarch's choice, and the role that this plays in his fate, perhaps renders him more sympathetic in this later climate. The consequences of his action consolidate his position not only as wanderer, but as questioner and seeker of a

wholeness of identity beyond the limits of a patriarchal context. It is the Cain-like identity within the double that, while remaining Other, attracts most sympathy.

The relation of such sets of biblical brothers to specific areas of land, and the description of their identities through this, is also significant. Cain is defined by his role as builder of the first city; Isaac continues his father Abraham's role as a father of Israel, while his brother Ishmael is identified through his nomadic lifestyle when he is cast out into the desert; and Jacob and Esau become personifiers of Judah and Edom respectively. This identification with certain areas or even geographical features is one that remains important to the portrayal of the double in nineteenth century literature, although in a very different way. While historical and national relevance is imposed onto the history of Israel's forebears, the concern with identity and the Self that becomes the primary subject of the double in more recent literature is manifest in the frequent removal of the setting of the motif from a finite geographical position, as the present study will illustrate. In this way, the focus is necessarily transposed onto the inner consciousness, and it is this that drives the narrative forward by enabling the progression outlined by Northrop Frye. The setting is consequently one that often contains qualities of the surreal, and is purposely manipulated by the author to aid the expression and progression of the objective of the double-motif.

While the segregation of brothers often operates to found the beginnings of new tribes and races, the theological significance of the theme is also relevant to a more recent outlook on the literature of the double, for it has clarified the central position of the patriarch not only to the initial division itself, but to the continuance and outcome of the narrative account. As Syrén has put it, 'on these occasions, [the fathers of the latest generation] act as representatives of God. Their preferences are implicitly God's as

³¹ Quinones, p.13.

well.³² In modern literature, therefore, a loss of religious faith means that the figure of the patriarch adopts many of the same functions. Consequently, it is as a means of averting the inevitability of providence that the modern protagonist attempts to outline an existence beyond the influence of the patriarch. Just as the word of God, and by extension, of the patriarch, ordains the fate of the brothers, writing is often employed by the later protagonists within the pairing of the double as a further method of acquiring their freedom, and of "writing" their own fate, as will be seen.

The focus that has been laid on the narratives of brothers in the Bible is justified insofar as certain themes central to the present investigation of the double in the work of Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier have been established. The relevance of Christian religion over Greek myth, of Cain as opposed to Ulysses, is determined by the fact that, while Ulysses functions in relation to the world and by participating in surrounding events, Cain is a figure who has become one of introspection, of an inner life of questioning and self-discovery. The search for identity through conflict, not with the dangers and turmoils of an outer world, but with those of the inner one, hence become distinct features of the nineteenth century literary double. This is accentuated yet further by the rise of the female double, whose quest for inner growth questions the need for and context of an external patriarchal system of events.

1.2 Gothic:

i. E. T. A. Hoffmann and German Romanticism

The *doppelgänger*, a word coined by Jean Paul Richter, was in many ways the product of the German romantic movement, and the ideas that surrounded this. A loss of religion was partially responsible for the rise of the supernatural in literature during this time, as

³² p.143.

well as for the concern with the inner consciousness. In Jean Paul's work, there thus predominates a sense of an existence in which events lie beyond the control of the characters – a sphere of mystery. This, however, does not preclude the presence of a real world whose system of events can be comprehended as operating within the bounds of cause and effect. This is a notion of the greatest importance to the conception and representation of the double as it concerns this study, for implicit in the contest and contrast of these two strata is the idea of alienation, including alienation from the Self. In this respect, the frequency with which one finds motifs such as 'purposeful disguises or exchanges, impersonations, masks, uncommon degrees of likeness with another person, identical twins, and so on – also hallucination, distorting mirrors, doubles, split personalities, delirium, madness' in this literature is significant.³³ The sensationalism shared with Gothic fiction is no coincidence, and exposes the close relationship between such overly dramatic features and the fragmentation of identity. This, indeed, is taken up in the sensationalist qualities not only of Wilkie Collins' writing, but also to a lesser extent of that of the other two authors central to this study.

The influence of ideas generated by the German philosophers of the period is also highly relevant to the interest in and development of this literary theme. Determining the direction of much of the work undertaken by these romantic philosophers was the influence of Kant. His central distinctions between rational and sensual, objective and subjective, drew upon the dividedness of man's existence. As Blackall also concedes, Kant's examination of the nature of experience, and his recognition of the imaginative in its relation to the nonconscious, and of understanding in its relation to the conscious, was

³³ Blackall, Eric A., *The Novels of the German Romantics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 70.

taken up by the later philosophers, and in particular by Fichte and Schelling.³⁴ Like their literary counterparts, then, these philosophers placed an emphasis on the duality behind existence. The current fascination with the relationship between mind and matter was also apparent in other areas, for instance in the work of Anton Mesmer, whose theory of magnetism led to the apparent display of the separate yet unified nature of mind and body through hypnotism, or as it was then called, "mesmerism". This "animal magnetism" and "mesmerism" was firmly incorporated into the repertoire of literary motifs in fiction of the double, as it also was in Gothic and sensation fiction.

Together with Jean Paul, E. T. A. Hoffmann is a figure whose influence spread across Europe, where his work was used as a basis for several musical compositions, including Tchaikovsky's 'The Nutcracker Suite'. The wide influence of his work, which incorporated the *doppelgänger* as well as other related ideas, thus deserves consideration here. Although he produced numerous short stories, as well as two novels, writing was only taken up by Hoffmann relatively late in life, when he was in his late thirties. His career as a judiciary civil servant in Prussia gave way to one as a musician in Bamberg. It was only after this that he took up writing, and there are references to both music and the state system present in many of his works. It is this disparity between the two worlds of art and officialdom that is generally accepted as the basis for his interest in the representation of a world of fantasy alongside one of finite reality.

Hoffmann's interest in mesmerism is applied to the expression of this idea, and indeed constitutes the basis of the story 'Der Magnetiseur', in which the mind of one character exerts control over the actions of another. References to magnetism are also made elsewhere in passing, for instance when the elderly lawyer of 'The Deed of Entail' exclaims that '[t]here's a sense of well-being flowing through me like an electric current',

³⁴ Ibid, p.137.

acknowledging this as an element of life and reading it as a portent of his death.³⁵ The Story of Krespel' also refers to the subject in another way. Here, illness prevents Krespel's daughter from singing, yet the voice of a Cremona violin becomes a substitute. Krespel describes how 'when [he] first played upon it, [he] felt as if [he] were merely the magnetiser – the mesmerist – who acts upon his subject in such sort that she relates in words what she is seeing with her inner vision' (*Tales*, pp.230-31). Krespel's role in "extracting" the music from the instrument is paralleled in this way with the role of a hypnotist in liberating the inner vision through the actions of the physical body. Relatedly, trance-like states, sleepwalking, and visions are often a part of these narratives. Hoffmann's incorporation of the ideas of his literary contemporaries is also noticeable: Jean Paul's *doppelgänger* appears in the short story 'The Doubles', where the sons of two friends are identical, while the protagonist of Adalbert von Chamisso's *Peter Schlemihl*, who sells his shadow to the devil, himself makes an appearance in 'Adventures of New Year's Eve'.

The extent to which such ideas were the forerunners of psychoanalysis is supported by the fact that Freud famously employed one of Hoffmann's stories, 'The Sandman', to illustrate his theory of the uncanny. The division in man's nature is one that is portrayed largely through the projections of his mind, and imagination assumes a primary role in this. The inability of the subjective mind to distinguish between what is external and "real", and what is the product of its own imaginative workings is fundamental to Hoffmann's work, while also referring back to Kant's theories concerning the nature of perception. Such instances of duality contribute to Hoffmann's representation of the world as unstable through its association with both fantasy and

³⁵ *Tales from Hoffmann*, translated by various hands, edited with an introduction by J. M. Cohen (London: The Bodley Head, 1951), p.187. All quotations from *Tales of Hoffmann* are taken from this edition.

actuality. It has been rightly noted in the introduction to the *Tales* that the meeting of these two levels is made the more forceful through the author's insistence on detail; thus not only the "real" but also the fantastical is carefully and accurately described. The distinction between the two states is emphasised by the inclusion of automata in several stories, where these have been created with the intention of being accepted as real humans. Nathaniel is thus gulled by Olympia's beauty in 'The Sandman', and, despite the robot's few words, mechanical movements, dead eyes, and cold hands and lips, he accepts her as real. Indeed, he *imposes* life onto her, feeling life and heat as he touches her, and hearing conversation from her lips: 'it seemed to him as if Olympia had spoken concerning him and his poetical talent out of the depth of his own mind; as if her voice had actually sounded from within himself' (*Tales*, p.139).

What this illustrates is one of Hoffmann's principal ideas, namely that "reality" can be altered through individual perspective. It is here that the inner, or imaginary, world comes into play, for it is that which distorts the real. This is made clear in 'The Sandman' by the prominence of the motif of eyes and seeing, and Nathaniel's fear of the monstrous Sandman, who steals eyes, consequently colours and shapes the narrative world. This also plays an important part elsewhere, for instance in the early example of detective fiction, 'Mlle de Scudéri', when the elderly heroine's view of Madelon is altered, and the latter's innocence becomes construed as evil calculation: in this way '[m]any things which had hitherto been considerable proofs of innocence and purity, now became evidences of studied hypocrisy and deep, corrupt wickedness' (*Tales*, p.284). While the reader is left in no doubt as to the truth in this instance, this is only rarely the case, as the structure of the narrative often indicates. 'The Sandman', for example, begins with a letter by Nathaniel, is followed by one from Clara, and is subsequently continued by an

unknown third party, a friend of Nathaniel's. The fantastical contents of the first letter are countered by Clara's clear-headed logical approach, in which all the events are rationally explained. The reader is then tempted to judge from a perspective of his or her own by the introduction of what is presumably a more uninvolved third party as narrator. The important point here for this study is the opposition of the first two views, one emphasised by Clara when she claims that Nathaniel must now think her 'impervious to any ray of the mysterious, which often embraces men with invisible arms; that she only sees the variegated surface of the world, and is as delighted as a silly child at some glittering golden fruit, which contains within it a deadly poison' (*Tales*, p.119). It is thus no mistake that, while Nathaniel's fantasies are established through the impressionable eyes of a child, Clara is judged by him to be an 'automaton' through her response (p.128).

The conflict that occurs in these narratives arises mainly from the inability to unify these two worlds or perspectives. Whereas this is presented in a more grounded manner in 'Mlle de Scudéri', with the villainous Cardillac feeling as though he were being torn in two by an angel and Satan, other stories present a deeply founded uncertainty on the protagonist's part that borders on insanity. Thus, the narrator of 'The Deed of Entail' cannot decide whether he has in fact encountered a ghost, or whether his experience is the result of imagination and drink. In a similar fashion, Anselmus repeatedly questions the validity of his senses in 'The Golden Pot'. On his first meeting with the three green snakes, indeed, he watches as they swim across the Elbe: 'he thought he saw in the reflected light three glowing-green streaks: but then [...] he perceived too well that the shine proceeded from the windows in the neighbouring houses' (*Tales*, p.28). This juxtaposition of logic and fantasy, while reflecting the two sides of the author's own life, is also accentuated through their proximity. Change from one to the other is often swift; for example, the Rauerin's garret and clothing alter before Veronica's eyes, as Lindhorst's

garden does before Anselmus'. Indeed, the narrator of 'The Golden Pot' confirms the encroachment of one onto the other, questioning whether the reader has not also sometime felt that something 'hovered round thee like an airy dream with thin translucent forms melting away in thy sharper glance' (p.39).

The reference to dreams is significant, for it is often through dreams that the realm of the fantastical is laid open, much as the 'funereal gloom' of the pine forest in which 'The Deed of Entail' 's Rossitten castle sits is counteracted when, 'only a quarter of a mile away [...] one is transported, as if by magic, into flowering fields, rich pasture and ploughland' (*Tales*, p.147). It is implied that there can be no real harmony between the two, even in 'The Golden Pot', which is categorised as a *Märchen*, or fairy-tale, by the author. Despite the reign of fantasy here, the two states cannot be successfully unified, as the repeated references to insanity suggest. The episode in which Anselmus is confined within a crystal bottle illustrates this idea clearly, for, along with him on Lindhorst's shelf also reside three Cross Church scholars and two law clerks, all imprisoned in the same fashion. While Anselmus perceives that this is so, however, his co-captives believe themselves to be free and standing on the Elbe bridge. While affirming that all perspectives may be construed as "real", this also places the artist (in this case Anselmus is a scribe) in a special position, for, as Anselmus points out, it is only 'by reason of [the other prisoners'] folly and low-mindedness, [that] they feel not the oppression of the imprisonment into which the Salamander has cast them' (p.92). Anselmus' final retreat into Atlantis with the Salamander's daughter is thus merely 'a Living in Poesy' (p.108). The ability to *see* this other world is therefore not granted to all, as the writer of the tale realises, when, perhaps echoing the author's own feelings, he anticipates the loss of this vision on his return to his garret and ordinary life, where he must once more be 'enthralled among the pettinesses of necessitous existence' (p.108). The recognition of the

existence of a higher state by the artist does not prevent his also being held captive in society's cage, although he may attempt to escape, as Anselmus attempts to break the crystal bottle. A not unreasonable interpretation might consequently be that [t]he final picture is one of deep gloom. The artist and society can no longer communicate. The true artist has visions either of escape and insanity or of conformity and domination.³⁶ The transportation or transcendence into a state of the individual's liberation is one which, the present study will argue, is represented by Collins and du Maurier through the theme of writing, and the prevalence of the inner imaginary life.

It is clear that the representation of the two worlds by Hoffmann, as well as by many of his contemporaries, is closely tied up with a search for some form of wholeness. Although Hoffmann concerns himself with the relationship between the individual and society, as the social satire present in his work shows, the central issue appears to be one in which resolution is only envisioned through the Self. Identity thus becomes central to this literature, in which the duality and overall fragmentation of existence is made meaningful in a personal sense. Once again, the possibility of a psychoanalytical interpretation of the stories supports this view. *The Devil's Elixir* furthermore illustrates this, as, in the first of Hoffmann's novels, the protagonist quits his monastery and embarks on a journey after he has drunk of the supposed elixir. Feeling that this has altered him and freed him of all inhibition, the course of the narrative charts his encounters with his own doubles, facets of his personality externalised into individual selves. The discovery that the elixir is not responsible for any change in him highlights the sense that the journey is an actualized development whereby the inner Self is examined. It is this feature that is taken up in the fiction of Collins and du Maurier, in

³⁶ Daemmrich, Horst S., *The Shattered Self: E. T. A. Hoffmann's Tragic Vision* (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1973), p.46.

both of which a fantastical or imaginary element signifies the exploration of the inner Self, represented through the double, as will be seen.

The fiction not only of Hoffmann, but also of Richter, Schlegel, Hölderin, Novalis, Tieck, Brentano, von Arnim, Bonaventura and Eichendorff, all of whom are discussed by Blackall from a similar angle, is perceived by him to be 'rooted in dismay at the disorientation, fragmentation, and materialism of life as their authors saw it around them. They are inspired by the sense of an urgent calling to restore fullness and wholeness, and to open up wider vistas and deeper wells to [the] world'.³⁷ This search for a sense of oneness, a venture to conciliate the two disparate worlds through these authors' writing, is shown by Blackall to be intimately connected with the world in which each lived, and their reaction to it. Like them, Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier also use personal experience as a means through which to channel a representation of a divided world, while also attempting to restore fictional harmony to it. The interplay between the existence of the imagination and that of the real therefore forms the core of this process.

ii. 'Transcendence' and The English Romantic Poets

The popularity of Hoffmann's work in England was not inconsiderable, despite Robert Carlyle's and Walter Scott's criticisms, and this success was exceeded in France. Yet it was the work of the German philosophers that primarily influenced the English romantic poets, as Coleridge's and Wordsworth's travels to Germany furthermore suggest. The concept of transcendentalism was therefore unsurprisingly a central concept in romantic literature. While certain other forms of duality are apparent, for instance in the opposing subjects that make up much of Blake's poetry, the central concern in relation to the present study lies in the fundamental treatment of the human

spirit as an entity independent of corporeal existence. In this, the influence of Kant is clear, for his theory of subjective idealism is important in this sense, and places the emphasis on the life of the mind, or spirit. The bifurcation of existence into a world of outer tangible reality and one of inner subjectivity is vital, and the English romantics take up the topic, concentrating on aspects governed by this inner Self, such as morality and consciousness. The introspective nature of this interest is apparent, for instance, in Coleridge's (among others') exploration of differing states of consciousness as induced by narcotics. The actualization and externalised enactment of psychological experiences in his work is also notable, and here, as elsewhere, physical and spiritual realities assume opposing characteristics, as the possibilities of the subjective life become invested with a sense of idealism.

The French Revolution also played an important part in the development of this concept, with its initial example of the potential of the human spirit. The degradation of an external social order's prevalence, of which this was an instance, contributed to the quest for harmony in the inner life of the individual. As such, it is clear in the work of the romantics that 'human society became an image of waste, futility and ultimate disorder.'³⁸ The removal of much romantic literature to a setting beyond the urban is significant, and Nature becomes a signifier of the inner life, as well as a place where the individual's harmony is sought. It is through communion with Nature that the romantic fictive Self thus seeks wholeness, for Nature itself is shown as exhibiting a sense of collective harmony and integration. Through this example of order, or divinity as expressed in this order, the Self is able to perceive that a higher truth exists, as well as to recognise the presence of a kindred quality in itself, one that raises the potentialities of man. While

³⁷ p.262.

³⁸ Foakes, R. A., *The Romantic Assertion* (London: Methuen, 1958), p.44.

Blackall was referring to the German romantics when he observed that they 'aimed rather at a presentation of the discord in all its fullness, the contrast of higher and lower natures, higher and lower worlds – but linked this to a transcendent concept of undividedness, which is an Absolute but which nevertheless engenders the divided phenomenal world', he might equally well have been speaking of the English romantic poets, for it is the aspiration towards this higher concept of existence that informs much of their work.³⁹

While this is a concept more or less common to all of these writers, the ' "moral law" ' – the recognition of an innate goodness in man, and the enactment of duty for its own sake – 'appealed differently to different poets in accordance with their individual thinking. To Coleridge and Wordsworth, it appealed as Virtue and Goodness, to Shelley it was Love, to Keats it was Beauty, and to Byron it was a recognition of all these through a consciousness of the vice and degradation prevalent in society and an exercise of will to over-ride these evils.'⁴⁰ The most relevant representation of the quest for a higher state by transcendentalism to the present study is that of Shelley, whose medium of Love enables the inclusion of the female as Other that is yet part of the Self. 'Epipsychidion' illustrates this point, with its "epipsyche" of the Other sought by the protagonist. Despite the pairing of, for instance, Laon and Cythna in 'The Revolt of Islam' as brother and sister, it is the sexually-based partnership that remains the dominant one in this context.

The elusiveness of the embodied quality of the Other in Shelley's poetry, and the frequent setting for it in a natural environment, describe it as the signifier of a higher state. Its representation as a woman is closely related to the poetry's preoccupation with narcissism, as the episode in 'Alastor' in which the Poet looks at his reflected image in a

³⁹ p.132.

⁴⁰ Jamil, Tahir, *Transcendentalism in English Romantic Poetry* (New York: Vantage, 1989), p.19.

well affirms. This self-involvement is explicated in the author's essay 'On Love', wherein he posits that

we dimly see within our intellectual nature a miniature as it were of our entire self [...]; a mirror whose surface reflects only the forms of purity and brightness; a soul within our soul that describes a circle around its proper paradise, which pain, and sorrow, and evil dare not overleap.⁴¹

It is this idea which outlines Shelley's philosophy that the higher state is one that exists within each man. As such, it is appropriate that he should portray it as Love, and attribute to it a quality of narcissism:

If we reason, we would be understood; if we imagine, we would that the airy children of our brain were born anew with another's; if we feel, we would that another's nerves should vibrate to our own, that the beams of their eyes should kindle at once and mix and melt into our own, that lips of motionless ice should not reply to lips quivering and burning with the heart's best blood. This is Love.
(*'On Love'*, *Poetry and Prose*, p.159)

This externalised component of the Self, while sharing many of the latter's characteristics, is, however, immaterial in nature, and when the vision embraces the Poet in 'Alastor', she only 'Fold[s] his frame in her dissolving arms', supporting the idea that

⁴¹ In *Poetry and Prose*, with an introduction and notes by A. M. D. Hughes (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p.159. Subsequent quotations of the essay will be taken from this edition, and will be given parenthetically in the text.

she is the Poet's soul or spirit, his *doppelgänger*. Accordingly, 'Her voice was like the voice of his own soul'.⁴²

Although based on similar principles, much of the poetry of the romantics rejects religion as a basis, preferring to believe in imagination as the portal to wholeness, and the mind as the way to the Ideal, and draws instead on the influence of Plato. The Christian antagonism between body and soul is repeated here, however, as the propulsion to this higher goal is repeatedly hampered by physical reality. It is *through* the senses, nevertheless, as Keats illustrates, that the recognition of the Ideal's existence is enabled, in his case through the appreciation of beauty. The protagonist's idealisation of the moon in *Endymion* is appropriate, therefore, and, as elsewhere, light becomes 'a fit symbol of spiritual illumination, of the transcendental vision, of the works of the imagination, or of the ideal'.⁴³

The positive resolution to this poem is not repeated in 'Alastor', however, where the limitations of the corporeal cannot be overcome. This is effectively signified in the terms through which the Ideal is presented, here not only as the spirit, but also as the potential sexual partner of the Poet. Despite the fact that what the Poet seeks is the Ideal, this is perceived through a medium that antagonizes that very concept. Hence,

the desire to possess an identity through dominance of something Other is an
effort to retain a pre-Edenic form that stems from a covert bourgeois psychology
– from latent desires for absolute self-power gratified in and through objects

⁴² In *The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, vol.2 of 4, edited by Neville Rogers (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p.49, ln.187; and p.48, ln.153. Subsequent quotations will be taken from this edition, and will be given parenthetically in the text.

⁴³ Foakes, p.46.

that can be exchanged or transformed, objects like the Poet's female doppelgänger.⁴⁴

This view is certainly relevant, for it is an economic outlook that the Poet describes in attempting transcendence and the acquisition of the Ideal through unifying with and *possessing* the Other. The social terms of this quest appear to pre-determine its failed outcome, emphasising not only the tension between tangible reality and the spirit by referring to the Other in sexual terms, but showing that this is not to be overcome, as the physical self-consciousness implicit in these references affirms. While this state may reflect the author's own outlook and challenge the system of bourgeois society, it also underlines that what is of importance is the recognition of the Ideal, and the quest towards attaining it.

The pessimistic denouement to this quest for the unified Self is reflected in other works, for example in 'Adonais', in which Keats' death is described as a welcome release of his spirit from life, and the author declares that 'No more let Life divide what Death can join together.'⁴⁵ 'Alastor' is unable to realise such a union in realistic terms. Like Keats' 'The Eve of St Agnes', in which Porphyro and Madeline are unified only when 'Into her dream he melted',⁴⁶ 'Alastor' questions the close alliance between sleep and death in this context, asking 'Does the dark gate of death/ Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,/ O Sleep?' (*The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, p.50, ln.211-13). The relationship of death – and by relation sleep – to the double, and most

⁴⁴ Privateer, Paul Michael, *Romantic Voices: Identity and Ideology in British Poetry 1789-1850* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1991), p.214.

⁴⁵ In *Percy Bysshe Shelley: Selected Poems*, edited with an introduction and notes by T. Webb (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1977), p.157, st.liv. Subsequent quotations will be taken from this edition, and will be given parenthetically in the text.

⁴⁶ Keats, John, *Poetical Works*, edited by H. W. Garrod (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.205, st.xxxvi.

particularly to the resolution of the tension it generates, is suggested in the reunion of the spirit of Shelley's *Adonais* with the 'Eternal': 'Dust to dust! but the pure spirit shall flow/ Back to the burning fountain whence it came,/ A portion of the Eternal' ('*Adonais*', *Percy Bysshe Shelley: Selected Poems*, pp.154-55, st.xxxviii). This idea is transposed onto the situation of the *doppelgänger* in 'Alastor' when the Poet's assimilation of the Other remains beyond reach in mortality, and the arrival at a sense of wholeness – the fulfilment of the Self's 'thirst[ing] after its own likeness' ('On Love', *Poetry and Prose*, p.159) – is not realised. Importantly, this becomes a theme clearly played out in later literature of the double, where death is often the only possible conclusion to the predicament of the fragmented identity.

While the romantics exposed the fragmentation of man's identity, and in so doing illustrated their belief that the common perception of an existent whole and liberated Self was a false one, as Privateer observes, they also centred by and large around the subject of man's potential, and the possibilities of attaining the Ideal.⁴⁷ This optimism countered the view not only of the fragmented identity, but also of that which it echoed – a fragmented society. The representation of an Edenic state in 'Alastor' is in this sense merely one instance of the idealisation of nature in the desire for harmony, much as Wordsworth's idealisation of childhood also refers to Edenic innocence. Shelley's female *doppelgänger* is a manifestation of this dissatisfaction, and a representative of the Edenic Ideal. As the integration of society is exposed as a fallacy, the inclusion of social aspects as well as individual ones to this framework is important, for while the *doppelgänger* highlights the disjunction of the Self's identity, duality as a concept in itself becomes an indicator of a larger scale of disharmony. That it is used, often in conjunction with the *doppelgänger*, by Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier thus reveals the inescapable tie that

is later recognised between the individual and society, even if this is not openly the direction or intent of the narrative.

The romantic Self's concern with the larger scheme of things, the belief that '[i]t was through [imagination and intuition] alone that man seized the truth about the supra-sensuous reality, and understood, to some extent, the inner plan of the Universe', becomes more concentrated in Victorian and *fin de siècle* literature.⁴⁸ Here, the questioning discontent and examination of the relationship between the individual and the established order which Byron's *Cain* exhibits is taken up, and whereas, for example, nature had been a reflection of harmonious unity, landscape now also becomes a signifier of dissonance and 'descent', as will be demonstrated. Furthermore, the romantic conviction of the superiority of the inner life, and of Nature, as well as the exemplification of the Ideal as light, are also to be seen (albeit often in reverse) in later literature. It is these same ideas that are apparent, for example, in 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde', where the narrative describes a city of darkness, disorder and death, an image which more overtly characterises James Thomson's poem, 'The City of Dreadful Night'. The idealism connected to the double by Shelley thus takes on a darker aspect, one that bears closer relationships with the Gothic genre, as the double, once an emblem of the Ideal, becomes to a great degree a signifier of despair. This is not to say, however, that the impact of romantic literature was insubstantial, for the heightened focus on the inner life and the imagination is an aspect that will be taken up in this study as an important component of the literature of the double.

iii. Gothic Feeling

⁴⁷ Privateer, p.227.

⁴⁸ Jamil, p.126.

The inclusion of a secret passageway in Hoffmann's 'Mlle de Scudéri' as an integral component of the plot, and the appropriation of Gothic modes by the English romantics, most prominently in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* illustrate the point that these two genres were to some degree interdependent. The romantic themes of 'the wanderer, the vampire, and the seeker after forbidden knowledge' as embodied, for example, in Frankenstein's monster, owe their presence to the Gothic in their insinuations of alienation and transgression, argues David Punter.⁴⁹ This says much for the influence of Gothic, which has been successfully carried down to the present day, as Punter's title suggests. This has been achieved through the works of various writers, among them Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier, all of whom employ Gothic modes. In addition, Edgar Allan Poe's contribution to the longevity of interest in the Gothic is not inconsiderable, and will be assessed.

Although originating in the mid to late 1700's, the initial popularity of Gothic fiction was anything but a passing trend, and lasted until the 1820's, after which period it was taken up and continued through various styles and genres of literature. Its birth, as well as being a backlash to rigid Augustan propriety and repression, was also, Punter observes, linked to the '*laissez faire* economy' that had come into being, and that resulted in social and individual instability.⁵⁰ The consideration of these two aspects together rationalizes the immediate and immense popularity which the Gothic novel found, and sheds light on the style which is so distinctively its own. This is characterised by a threatening and deceptive world, heights of feeling, a setting in the past, melodrama, and a frequently convoluted plot played out by a standard range of characters. Murder, imprisonment, rape, disguise, torture, and the supernatural more often than not find their

⁴⁹ *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day* (London: Longman, 1980), p.99.

way into this fiction, and into a world where ghosts walk abroad, secret passages are uncovered, morality is trampled, and potions and poisons are used. The exaggerated and fantastical nature of these novels are a vital part of their appeal, and are aspects which define the prevalence of the imaginary over the real. It is clear in Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, for instance, that Emily St. Aubert's 'imagination, ever awake to circumstance, suggested even more terrors, than her reason could justify' during her stay at Udolpho.⁵¹ In this, the connection with romantic literature is clear, yet the manner in which the imaginary is employed is obviously significantly different. Indeed, Punter underlines this when he notes how, in Blake's and Coleridge's writing, 'there is [...] no motive of mere sensationalism, but a use instead of Gothic exaggeration as a means of conveying the underlying horror of the everyday world', much as Shelley uses this to highlight his 'fascination with the coexistence of beauty and horror'.⁵²

The consistent inclusion of dreams, visions, forebodings, and intuition emphasise the dominance of subjectivity and imagination in this world, one which eschews the influences of the "real" world by refusing a fixed location within time and space. The dream-like quality of the text itself is the result. The focus of this fiction, despite its insistence on subjectivity, is one that does not favour the depiction of characters of any psychological depth, preferring instead to rely on the effect produced by the Gothic world as a whole, itself equally if not more important than the delineation of the individual characters themselves. This is seen in the fact that the author has a tendency to depict the characters' feelings through their physical being, for instance in paleness, faintness, staggering, and so on, thus rendering them psychologically inaccessible.⁵³

⁵⁰ p.413.

⁵¹ Edited with an introduction by Bonamy Dobrée, with explanatory notes by Frederick Garber (London, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p.228.

⁵² Punter, p.108.

⁵³ Howells, Coral Ann, *Love, Mystery, and Misery: Feeling in Gothic Fiction* (London: The Athlone Press,

The dissociation of the Gothic world from a matter-of-fact reality or any sense of likelihood is marked, not least in the predominance of the supernatural, and the attempt at emancipation from the limitations of realism is reflected in the situation of the victimized heroine of the Gothic novel, one who is frequently both physically and socially confined. This stereotyped image of the helpless heroine is integral to the text, for it is through her that the reader's sense of horror is activated. Her fears are imposed onto her surroundings, as everything assumes a quality of threat. Supporting this, Punter, in referring to *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, notes that

it is a mark of Radcliffe's skill that the many and terrifying dangers which threaten Emily while at Udolpho are never clear. At one moment, it seems to be a fixed marriage, at another rape, at another the theft of her remaining estates, at another supernatural terrors, but none of these come to pass.⁵⁴

This purposeful representation of a world perceived through a veil of horror is important, for it invariably results in extremes of interpretation, of positive and negative with little in between. The portrayal of landscape conforms to this view, uniting extremes of feeling in its blend of fairytale castles and threatening antique ruins.⁵⁵ This extends to the manner in which the characters themselves are viewed, and the emergence of at least one male villain, lending itself too to the inclusion of polar opposites, and the creation of doubles, albeit indistinct ones. The villain/hero pairing is conspicuous in this respect, although female characters are often also paired through similarity or substitution. The relevance of heredity and ancestry is also important here, for forebears are seen to be

1978), p.9.

⁵⁴ p.67.

⁵⁵ Howells, p.24.

reborn through their descendants. The most central instance of doubling is, however, that of the Gothic villain as split identity, as Astrid Schmid recognises.⁵⁶

Thus, the themes of '*violence, envy, and mystery*' that were described as integral to the Cain-Abel theme by Quinones re-emerge in a rather different context in Gothic fiction, where the central narrative position of the female activates these extremities of feeling and action.⁵⁷ The emphasis on the inner life that is such an integral characteristic of later fiction of the double here creates the fictive world, which become a possible exteriorisation of inner feelings and fears. The displacement of identity implicit in such a situation also makes this literature relevant to the fiction of the double. Here too the narrative progresses in an attempt to re-establish the displaced identity, yet this, if at all, is only ever possible through the plot. The predominance of the imaginary therefore ensures that the accumulation of horror, although it might be explained in the text, is not defused or lost, for it has not been a product of a rational sequence of events, but is instead a product of inner fear. The futility of any "real" defiance or defeat of horror is also suggested by Hoffmann when the King of France, attributed with divine power by his people, is believed to be able to put an end to the mysterious deaths and inexplicable murders that sweep through Paris in 'Mlle de Scudéri'. In this, the trust in the power of external reality is exposed as fallacious, for he is likened to Hercules defeating the Hydra, or Theseus vanquishing the Minotaur (*Tales*, p.262), a reference that undercuts the assumption of power, for the monstrous becomes a product of the mythical world, and as such remains unassailable.

⁵⁶ *The Fear of the Other: Approaches to English Stories of the Double (1764-1910)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996). Schmid uses this as the basis of her thesis, identifying the split identity of the villain in the classic Gothic novel as a prototype for doubling in later Gothic fiction.

⁵⁷ Quinones, p.9.

The Gothic reliance on a sense of helplessness instituted by an external sequence of events through the plot, as well as through the constructions of the imagination, ensures that this fiction is based on a tension between real and imaginary. The individual's helplessness in the face of social law is reflected here, as is the alternative quest for a life created by the inner Self as a form of release from this oppression. The literature of the double's quest for an integrated identity through a focus on the imagination, as will be demonstrated in this thesis, may be said to be a descendant of the Gothic in this sense, while in addition employing many of its conventions. Both Stevenson and Collins earn a place in Punter's study of the history of Gothic fiction, as, the present study would argue, du Maurier also should. Not only the plot and setting of Collins' *The Woman in White*, but also the characterisation of its villain, Count Fosco, mark it as Gothic, while Stevenson's 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' continues in the tradition of James Hogg and Mary Shelley. The inclusion of Angela Carter in Punter's study of the Gothic may in several ways be paralleled to a consideration of Daphne du Maurier in the same context. This is relevant not only in the focus on the female's relation to horror, but also in the suggestion in Carter's writing that the Gothic vision is in fact an accurate account of life, of the ways we project our fantasies onto the world and then stand back in horror when we see them come to life.⁵⁸

iv. Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe continues the tradition of the Gothic by centring around a fictive world based on feeling and subjectivity rather than on realism. His work is highly relevant to a study of the double, thanks not only to his enormous literary influence, but also to his popularisation of new techniques and modes. His employment of the female as

⁵⁸ Punter, p.398.

double is significant in this sense, as is his psychological exploration of characters. The poverty that Poe experienced during his lifetime doubtless contributed to his melancholy disposition, and a fascination with death was exacerbated by the untimely death of his young wife. The sensitivity of his character is apparent in the critical assumption that he was an opium-user, an unprovable explanation of the 'heightening of consciousness' evident in both author and characters.⁵⁹ The acuity of the mental life this suggests renders an interest in liminal states of mind – as evident in the themes of mesmerism, reincarnation, and insanity, for instance – unsurprising.

The influence of E. T. A. Hoffmann on Poe was extremely probable, as Palmer Cobb's study shows, despite the fact that this cannot be unequivocally proven.⁶⁰ Cobb bases his argument on the publication of *The Devil's Elixir* in the American 'Blackwood's Magazine' in 1824. In addition, Carlyle's *German Romance* (1827) appeared together with his translation of 'The Golden Pot', and subsequent translations of 'Mlle de Scudéri', 'The Deed of Entail', and 'Master Flea' appeared in 1826, followed by 'The Jesuitchurch in G.', 'The Sandman', and 'The Elementargeist' in 1844.⁶¹ The similarities between certain themes used by the two writers is evident in the accusation of plagiarism, one that Poe vehemently denied.⁶² Poe was also familiar with the work of Dickens, reviewing several of his novels and stories, and finally meeting Dickens in 1842 during the author's visit to the United States.

Despite his attempt at a novella, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, it is for his short stories that Poe is best known, and it is in these that his literary talents are better shown, for brevity here aids the maintenance of intensity and suspense. Appropriating the

⁵⁹ Hammond, J. R., *An Edgar Allan Poe Companion: A Guide to the Short Stories, Romances and Essays* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1981), p.29.

⁶⁰ *The Influence of E. T. A. Hoffmann on the Tales of Edgar Allan Poe* (Columbia: The University Press, 1908).

⁶¹ Ibid, pp.15-16.

conventions of the Gothic, Poe invests them with a more outright treatment of the theme of the double which ranges from the detective duo of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' and 'The Mystery of Marie Roget' to the siblings of 'The House of Usher', and the male-female partnership of, for example, 'Ligeia'. The first of these pairings is based around the author's exploration of logic and rationality through the characters of C. Auguste Dupin and his nameless companion in the tales of so-called ratiocination. The almost unnatural proximity of the two characters is emphasised when the narrator of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' refers to Dupin as a 'Bi-part soul', indicating the presence of his companion as a *doppelgänger*.⁶³ Such a relationship between detective and side-kick is repeated in Arthur Conan Doyle's pairing of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson as direct descendants of Poe's twosome. It is only in the detective tales that Poe attempts a reasonable explanation, like Hoffmann, of inexplicable occurrences, preferring to leave such mysteries un-rationalised in other tales, as an underscoring of horror.

The story dealing most forthrightly and exclusively with the theme of the *doppelgänger*, however, is 'William Wilson', in which William is haunted by his *alter ego*, Wilson, who, in the tradition of Gothic extremes of perception, is his 'arch-enemy and evil genius', whilst also possessing 'the elevated character, the majestic wisdom, the apparent omnipresence and omnipotence' of a divine being (*Poetry and Tales*, pp.354-55). Again repeating the Gothic preoccupation with projecting neuroses, it is never ascertained whether William's other Self is a physical being or a creation of his imagination. The author nevertheless indicates that the narrator is highly subjective in his outlook, supporting the latter view. The narrator indeed begins by asking, in retrospect, whether he has not been 'living in a dream?' (p.337) A psychological treatment is again

⁶² Ibid, p.4.

⁶³ In *Poetry and Tales* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1984), p.402. Subsequent

highlighted by the indication of the power of William's imagination, for, while his childhood was, he claims, sensational and far beyond the 'gray shadow' of others' remembrances, he is able to transport himself back to his school days to the extent of being able to feel, smell, and hear the memory (pp.341, 338).

This imaginative strength is initially evident in the narrator's perception of duality during the course of his daily school routine, be it in the two ushers who attend the class, or in the principal and pastor:

With how deep a spirit of wonder was I wont to regard him from the remote pew in the gallery, as, with step solemn and slow, he ascended the pulpit! This reverend man, with countenance so demurely benign, with robes so glossy and so clerically flowing, with wig so minutely powdered, so rigid and so vast, – could this be he who, of late, with sour visage, and in snuffy habiliments, administered, ferule in hand, the Draconian laws of the academy? Oh, gigantic paradox, too utterly monstrous for solution! (p.339)

The anticipation of the appearance of his own *alter ego* is coupled with a suggestion of the psychological explanations behind such a development. A reference to an early enforced independence is important – 'at an age when few children have abandoned their leading-strings, I was left to the guidance of my own will, and became in all but name, the master of my own actions' (p.338) – for Wilson is evidently a substitute for this external moral guiding force.

The entrance of Wilson into the narrator's school reinforces the self-alienation experienced by William, notably in the 'plebeian' nature of his name (p.344), for, sharing

as they do this Christian name, the two are now often confused. This detachment from the Self is emphasised once again in the sleeping arrangements of the students, for while the rest share a dorm, Wilson has his own private sleeping-closet, in a Gothic image of repressive imprisonment. Furthermore, the degree of subjectivity with which William views the world is clear in the fact that no-one else is able to perceive the identical appearance of the two.

Perhaps the *gradation* of his copy rendered it not so readily perceptible; or, more possibly, I owed my security to the masterly air of the copyist, who, disdaining the letter, (which in a painting is all the obtuse can see,) gave but the full spirit of the original for my individual contemplation and chagrin. (p.345)

This 'spirit' indicates the nature of the relationship between the two Williams, one upheld by references to Wilson as the 'master mind' with an 'intolerable spirit of contradiction', and 'no heel of Achilles' (pp.341, 342-43, 342). The absence of any physical weakness supports the spiritual existence of Wilson as William's other Self and, escaping from both Wilson and the school, he proceeds to indulge in 'a week of *soulless* dissipation' (p.348).

The Gothic mode of Wilson's pursuit, the sudden entry of his cloaked figure into a room when William is cheating at cards, extinguishing the candle as he does so, and his eerie whisper, culminate in the presentation of the final scene. This, appropriately, is set at a masquerade ball, where a duel takes place between the two. The subsequent removal of Wilson's concealing mask coincides with a fatal stab, and William's recognition of himself in his opponent. This murder of his own soul results in his own gradual decline, for, as the narrator says at the start of the tale, 'am I not now dying a victim to the horror

and the mystery of the wildest of all sublunary visions?' – a literal dying of horror (pp.337-38).

The fragmentation of the Self is depicted through an exploration of the boundary between life and death in a slighter tale, 'Loss of Breath', in which breath is equated with the soul. Having lost his soul/breath, Lackobreath suddenly finds himself 'alive with the qualifications of the dead – dead with the propensities of the living – an anomaly on the face of the earth' (*Poetry and Tales*, p.152). Evan Carton associates this state with impotence, and is correct at the least insofar as sexuality functions as a force between life and death in Gothic, where ancestry is such a major concern.⁶⁴ The coupling of Lackobreath with Windenough, his sexual rival, finally results in the return of breath and life, in a reunion of body and spirit.

The spirit is once more externalised in Poe's tales of the female double as partner – 'Berenice', 'Morella', 'Eleonora', and 'Ligeia', all characters who function in a spiritual and intellectual capacity as 'disembodied Platonic essences'.⁶⁵ A lack of physical being is evidenced in 'Ligeia' by the fact that the heroine has neither family background nor paternal name. Indeed, as well as being physically 'emaciated', 'she came and departed as a shadow', with light footfall (*Poetry and Tales*, p.263). Even Ligeia's beauty – her marble-white skin and black hair – is referred to as other-worldly, and this conception is brought to pass, for the narrator, viewing her as through 'the radiance of an opium-dream' (p.263), is reminded by her eyes of a chrysalis or a butterfly. Following her death, her spirit is reinstated in his perception within his second wife, through thinking of and longing for Ligeia.

⁶⁴ *The Rhetoric of American Romance* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1985), p.93.

⁶⁵ Knapp, Bettina L., *Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1984), p.120.

The setting for this subjective rebirth is a typically Gothic one – a gloomy chamber with a bed of ebony covered by a pall-like canopy, hung with tapestries shimmering with phantasmagoric effect – and is associated with the Druids and the Saracens. A similarly mystical setting is created in 'The House of Usher', where the double appears as the twins, Roderick and Madeline Usher. The mansion itself, apart from its decaying surroundings, is appropriate to the tale, for it is intricately connected with the male line of heredity of the household. Thus the narrator considers 'the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the character of the people', and 'the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exerted upon the other' (*Poetry and Tales*, p.319). The title therefore refers not only to the family but to the house itself, and continues in the Gothic tradition of crumbling castles and mysterious mansions.

Madeline is another of the spiritual female doubles, and accordingly suffers from 'a gradual wasting away of the person' (p.323). Her liminal position is signalled by the distance that she keeps from the two men, and following her death she is interred in the family vault. This, in fact, is a repeated theme in Poe's tales, where the house, a physical symbol of the inner mind, conceals its secrets and fears in cellars (as in 'The Cask of Amontillado' and 'The Black Cat') or beneath floorboards (as in 'The Tell-Tale Heart'). The psychological significance of these houses is again indicated by William Wilson's perception of the boarding-house as 'veritably a palace of enchantment! There was really no end to its windings – to its incomprehensible sub-divisions. It was difficult, at any given time, to say with certainty upon which of its two stories one happened to be' (p.340). Concealment of a person or object is therefore filled with psychological significance, and the confrontation with this repressed entity is envisioned in Madeline's resurrection in 'The House of Usher'. This sequence is prefigured by a multitude of

Gothic motifs suggesting the coming horror and the reversal of rational order into the supernatural: a storm, clouds pressing against the mansion, and the unearthly light emanating from the tarn. Madeline's entry into the room, spattered with blood, is followed by the simultaneous deaths of the twins, and the collapse of the other – the literal – house of Usher.

In the Gothic tradition, Poe expands the genre into an area of psychological significance, one that leads Punter to claim that 'popular consciousness of psychology owes as much to him as to Freud and Jung together', a statement which, whether it be accurate or not, reflects the extent of psychological significance of these tales.⁶⁶ The concern governing these stories is therefore to a great degree one that centres around the exploration and understanding of the Self (one also enacted in Poe's novella, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, which takes up the theme of the romantic journey), and is frequently depicted through the motif of the double. Thus C. Auguste Dupin's companion functions solely as a complement to his friend's skills. In the same way, other doubles compel self-discovery and a confrontation with the Other which, in the manner of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's engraving, 'How They Met Themselves', results in the death of one or both. The enormous influence which Poe exerted is examined by Jeffrey Meyers and H. H. Kühnelt, and extends from the French Symbolists to Dostoyevsky, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Kipling, among others.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Punter, p.203.

⁶⁷ Meyers, Jeffrey, *Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy* (London: John Murray, 1992); and H. H. Kühnelt, *Die Bedeutung von Edgar Allan Poe für die Englische Literatur* (Innsbruck: Wagner'sche Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1949).

1.3 Conclusions:

In briefly sketching a literary tradition of the double, this chapter has concentrated only on certain areas, and attempted to draw out only such aspects and themes as are relevant to the representation of the motif by Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier. A consideration of the religious and mythological basis has underlined not only the masculine-centred history of the tradition, but also extended this to explain the pertinence of the patriarch to the theme, as adjudicator between the brothers. The resulting conflict and violence is furthermore seen to be frequently associated with the environment – with land or a city. Connotations of divinity are also highlighted in these fraternal relationships, introducing the notion of pre-destination, despite the fact that this is often in contradiction to the expected moral progression of events.

The development and alteration of perspective over the ages in relation to the Cain-Abel coupling renders it increasingly relevant to a quest for wholeness of identity, and this latter is an idea that has informed the work of E. T. A. Hoffmann and his contemporaries. The increasing interest in subjective idealism, led by Kant, functions to shift the emphasis onto the inner life of subjectivity, and through it a dual existence comes into play in Hoffmann's fiction. The importance of the imagination, of sleep, and of dreams is underlined in his literature, and becomes a central characteristic of the literature of the double. The revelatory exploration of the inner life of the imagination as depicted by Hoffmann finds another actualized form in the motif of the double, where the protagonist is also able to attempt wholeness through confrontation with a suppressed part of the Self. The introspective nature of English romantic literature likewise elicits a discord between the individual's consciousness of a higher reality accessible through the

imagination, and his rootedness in a real world, also frequently represented through the double.

The enormous contribution of Gothic literature to the development of the double is evident in the characteristics of mystery and sensationalism associated with the motif of the double. The dissonance between real and imaginary is once more imperative here, where the resulting tension is presented in the physical helplessness that is such a central feature of this fiction, and the projection of inner fears and fantasy onto the outer world, with the inevitable outcome of horror. Poe's appropriation of the Gothic mode is elaborated through a more forthright treatment of the double, and the inclusion of the female as double. A clearly psychological approach is employed here, where the relationship of the protagonist to his Other, revealing the fragmentation of the Self, is complemented by the use of symbolism and metaphor, not least in the representation of setting. Rosemary Jackson, in her study of the fantastic as a literary mode, defines the fantastic as drawing on both the marvellous and the mimetic, pulling the reader away from a narrative that is normally formulated using the devices of realism, to one bearing a closer resemblance to the marvellous in its reliance on, for instance, the supernatural. Jackson cites the narrative instability inherent in this formula as a quality lying at the heart of the fantastic as a mode.⁶⁸ The motif of the double assumes a primary position in nineteenth century fiction as a means whereby this shift from realism to fantasy is actuated, and accepted boundaries are challenged. Within this, however, is an implicit and increasing focus on the imagination within fiction, one that will become evident through an assessment in this light of the work of the three authors central to the present study. From the Gothic onwards, there is a gradual transition from the marvellous to the uncanny – the history of the survival of Gothic horror is one of progressive

internalization and recognition of fears as generated by the self.⁶⁹ The birth of psychoanalysis, its assessment of the uncanny, and its challenge to perceptions of the wholeness of the Self, is certainly evident in the literary mode that explores the nature of the Other. In the examination of fiction that follows within this thesis, the tensions between *heimlich* and *unheimlich* are seen to manifest themselves as the imagination, which strives to enable a shift from a real to a subjective – and therefore an "unrealistic" – narrative, resulting in the appearance of the double.

The reliance on previous areas of literature, most obviously the Gothic, then, gives a clear context to the function of the imagination in the fiction of R. L. Stevenson, Wilkie Collins, and Daphne du Maurier as writers who not only concern themselves with the instability of boundaries involved in realism and fantasy, but do so in a manner, as the present study will argue, that constitutes a significant step in the development of this mode. The collective contribution of the writings explored above to the development of the literature of the double is consequently evident in the following examination of the work of these three authors. Their treatment of the double accordingly expresses many of the ideas already highlighted, in a manner which, while remaining unique to each, nevertheless conforms to certain standards. The relationship of the individual to his Other in this context is expounded through many of the same themes – for example the role of the patriarch, the representation of landscape, the displacement of the Self as Other in the figure of the foreigner, the significance of the subconscious through dreams and fantasy, and the presence of masquerade. What renders these texts distinct from others using such themes in a similar, that is to say a subjective, manner, is the way in which they are used to *distort* the external world. While, then, Tess may be hanged on a beautiful day in

⁶⁸ *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (London, New York: Methuen, 1981), p.34.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p.24.

Hardy's novel, this is never possible here, where the dominance of the inner life colours the narrative world. The position of these texts as Gothic in nature is therefore clear, for they too are discontinuous with the real world, and function on a clearly psychological level.

The external conflict depicted in the literature following the Cain-Abel prototype therefore becomes internalised here through a focus on the inner life, and becomes even more evident in the interplay between real and imaginary. It is only in Stevenson's fiction that a clear reference to a religious tradition is visible, and it is this that affects the course of Frye's theory of 'descent' and 'ascent' in his work. Both in this context, and in reference to the literary tradition of the double, new themes are introduced by these authors as being relevant; writing is perhaps the most important of these as an expression of the inner life, and expands on the idea of "buried" writing as it is often found in the Gothic narrative. Through this too, the traditional physical journey as quest is transmuted into a progression enabled by the expression of the inner Self. Thus, while William Patrick Day claims that, in the Gothic narrative, '[f]antasy could not tell the truth about the world since it referred to a world that did not really exist', this does not hold true in the fiction of Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier, for the protagonist does not seek a truth about the world, but rather a truth about the Self. Consequently, at least in the work of the latter two writers, this is made possible through the workings of fantasy and the imagination.⁷⁰

⁷⁰*In the Circles of Fear and Desire: A Study of Gothic Fantasy* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), p.9.

Chapter 2: Robert Louis Stevenson

2.1 Influences and Background

Robert Louis Stevenson's immense contribution to the literary heritage of the double-motif makes a consideration of his work essential to any analysis of the literary treatment of the theme. It is difficult to over-estimate the importance of Stevenson's fiction in this respect, especially in view of the astounding popularisation of one of his most remarkable works, 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'.⁷¹ This, however, constitutes only one of many instances in which the motif is introduced into his fiction – in novels, novellas, short stories, and plays. Generally recognised as one of the most quintessential writers employing the device of the double, Stevenson's fiction has stimulated a vast quantity of criticism concerned with this particular area. Within this criticism, however, the centre of attention has, unsurprisingly, remained focused upon a story of now virtually legendary status, that of a respectable doctor whose *alter ego*, assuming a different shape, commits unspeakable atrocities. The present study proposes that, by examining a wider selection of the author's writings, in conjunction with some of his relevant views and experiences, the subject may be approached from a more specific angle relating to the treatment of the motif of the double. Elements which will be isolated and analysed will then shape the present study's examination of the treatment of the theme in the fiction of both Wilkie Collins and Daphne du Maurier.

The central and dominating presence of the double in Stevenson's fiction, together with the attention given to the psychological life of his characters (one later paralleled in the work of Oscar Wilde and Thomas Hardy, among others), leads one to expect a relatively profound treatment of the theme. This is not necessarily the case,

however, for Stevenson's use of the motif is less extensive than Collins', for example, being infinitely more introspective and self-occupied. Despite the various guises and settings through which this obsessive authorial analysis of the double takes place, it is informed, as the present study will argue, by only one central underlying concern: that of the author's relationship with his father, and the impact made upon it by their disagreements over religious issues.

By applying Northrop Frye's theory of 'descent' and 'ascent' to Stevenson's fiction, it will become clear that a very *personal* perspective is of importance to the use of the double in his literature, and is one that directly affects the characteristics and indeed the outcome of the narrative progression outlined above.⁷² While the motif of the double, a primary element of the formula according to Frye, should chart the movement from a state of restriction to one of freedom through a shift from 'descent' to 'ascent', the present study will show that this is never satisfactorily achieved in Stevenson's work. While his earlier boys' adventure tales do indeed present a form of 'ascent', it is a false one, and disappears entirely from his later fiction. It will be demonstrated that the author's religious background and personal relationship with his father bear directly upon his treatment of the motif of the double; by closely examining the manner in which narrative progression is manifest in the narratives, its purpose, and relative success or failure can be assessed and explored.

The literary influences on Stevenson were numerous, and play an important part in shaping his presentation of the double. The inheritance which he drew upon was rich with motifs of the double. It is certain, for example, that he was familiar with James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, and with the work of

⁷¹ The story will henceforth be referred to in this chapter as 'Jekyll and Hyde'.

⁷² *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London:

Sir Walter Scott, who shared Stevenson's interest in Scottish history, as well as with that of Edgar Allan Poe, whose works he reviewed in *The Academy* in January 1875. It is also clear that Stevenson had read virtually all of Dickens' major fiction, and was divided between the highest praise (for instance, of the Christmas stories) and scathing disparagement (of *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*). Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* was also 'frightfully interesting', while Fosco is very great, very great; I envy Fosco, I had rather been Fosco than R. L. S.⁷³ Stevenson's opinion of *Armada* was likewise highly favourable, and he had also read *No Name*. The fragmented narrative structure of 'Jekyll and Hyde' owes something, perhaps, not only to Dickens' *Bleak House*, but more directly to Collins' narrative presentation.

A novel centring around the implications of marriage on the female's autonomous identity, George Meredith's *The Egoist* was listed by Stevenson as being one of the books that had most influenced him, and which, he stated, he was about to read for the seventh time.⁷⁴ Such a compulsive interest in the book's hero is likely to have originated from Stevenson's conviction that he was the original of Willoughby Patterne. Although the form of double found in Meredith's novel – that of man and woman – is one entirely absent from Stevenson's fiction, the tension between personal and social identity is important to both writers. Willoughby, the egoist, desires to assimilate a woman as partner, demanding a self-effacing dedication. Such a union threatens to be so utterly complete as to obliterate the woman herself, and it is here that the parallel with Stevenson's image of the *alter ego* is clear. The victim's fate of a virtual death by

Harvard University Press, 1976), chapters four and five.

⁷³ *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*, edited by Bradford A. Booth & Ernest Mehew (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), in 8 volumes; in a letter, Sep. 1868, vol. I, p. 144; and July 1883, vol. IV, p. 143. All quotations from the *Letters* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

⁷⁴ 'Books Which Have Influenced Me', in *Essays in the Art of Writing*, seventh edition (London: Chatto & Windus, 1919), p. 85.

engagement is highlighted by Meredith through repeated references to the ritual of suttee. The mirror-imagery so often found in tales of the double is also made relevant in this text, as the egoist searches for a mate in whom he will be able to see his own reflection: '[i]t would be marriage with a mirror, with an echo; marriage with a shining mirror, a choric echo'.⁷⁵ The search for a wholeness of identity, as well as the slavish bond that may exist between "two" characters, and the social need for a "mask", are therefore common to the work of both writers.

Stevenson's involvement and interest in contemporary literature extended to a wider field, as his essays on Samuel Pepys, Robert Burns, Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau, Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas illustrate.⁷⁶ It is possible, given the status of his subjects, that Stevenson viewed himself as belonging within a tradition that not only influenced but also unavoidably imposed limitations on his work. The overt exclusion of women and their concerns from the majority of his fiction is perhaps indicative of this, for he is more closely affiliated through his early adventure fiction with a trend (as many similarities with the work of Rider Haggard affirm) towards a resurgence of "masculine" literature; that is to say, fiction created around a nucleus of adventure, danger and ultimate triumph for the male protagonist. The tension between expressing his ideas within such traditionally determined boundaries, and their novel and ambitious nature, is one that reflects the larger conflict occurring within Stevenson's narratives – one that originates from his familial life, and colours virtually all of his major works, as well as determining the failure of the motif of the double within the scheme of the romance narrative structure.

⁷⁵ Meredith, George, *The Egoist* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, c 1968), ch.37, p.456.

⁷⁶ *The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson*, with an introduction by Malcolm Elwin (London: Macdonald, 1950). All quotations from *The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

The author's relationship with his father was of essential importance in this respect, for Thomas Stevenson grew to represent much of what Stevenson associated with bourgeois Edinburgh society. The author's representation of the double life is intricately connected with his perception of his father, and this relationship is vital to a consideration of the motif. The social world of the Scottish capital was constructed around a strict set of values founded upon the tenets of Presbyterianism and the inheritance of Calvinism, whose fierce doctrines were exploited by Hogg in his *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. Although Stevenson's attitude towards religion was at the very least ambiguous in later life, there is no doubt that the ideas with which his imaginative mind was fed in infancy left a permanent mark on him. His close relationship with his nurse, Alison Cunningham, or "Cummy", is well documented, as is the fervour with which biblical tales, as well as those of the Covenanters, were told by her to the fascinated boy.

As a young adult, however, Stevenson was attracted to the lower haunts of Edinburgh life, where he frequented the cheapest taverns and befriended thieves and prostitutes. This was at least in part an attempt to escape from what seemed to be ever-mounting restrictions of family life, ones aggravated by the growing tensions in the household concerning religion during this period. Finally admitting that he was an agnostic, Stevenson shattered his father's peace of mind, also bringing countless religious discussions and deeply-felt reproaches upon himself, many of which are discussed in letters to Charles Baxter and Frances Sitwell. 'You have rendered my whole life a failure', claimed Thomas, inciting a guilt to which Stevenson felt he could never reconcile himself. The wretchedness experienced by both men 'in honour of my (what is it?) atheism or blasphemy' was by no means inconsiderable, and the tensions suffered by Stevenson during this period, when his loyalties to his father were countered by his

loyalties to himself, are clear: '[i]f it were not too late, I think I could almost find it in my heart to retract; but it is too late; and again, am I to live my whole life as one falsehood?' (*Letters*, vol.I, Feb.1873, p.273; and Sep.1873, p.297).

The tortuous sessions during which Thomas would try every means to dissuade his son from his course additionally convinced Stevenson that he had no less than 'damned the happiness of (probably) the only two people who care[d] a damn about [him] in the world' (*Letters*, vol.I, Feb.1873, p.273). Nor was the condemnation aimed at the young Stevenson by his father one that was limited to a strictly personal context, for Thomas' views and system of ethical and social beliefs were ones shared by respectable Edinburgh society in general. This sense of exclusion was not, however, an entirely new one to Stevenson, who was already perceived as somewhat of an eccentric, hovering precariously on the borders of genteel society. This, indeed, was an opinion that he partially fostered, dressing in an unconventional bohemian fashion, often in a long black velvet jacket, and with flowing shoulder-length hair. His personal appearance – a slim build, large dark eyes set in a long pale face, and an air of delicacy – did nothing to dispel this image. There was no doubt that polite society's judgement on his religious views would have been equally unforgiving, and Thomas' reproaches were therefore merely indicative of a more universal censure.

Others of Stevenson's interests were also somewhat subversive in this climate. His preoccupation with the subconscious, for instance, probably originated from the troubled dreams with which he had been plagued since childhood, ones elaborated upon in his essay 'A Chapter on Dreams'. The theories of Darwin were also gaining a following now, and appealed to Stevenson's interest in man's dual nature: even when distracted, 'I knew I could generally read Darwin', he stated in 1873 (*Letters*, vol.I, Sep.1873, p.287). Not only did such ideas signal a revolution in contemporary thought, but they opposed

the established tenets of Calvinism, and undercut the social ideals against which Stevenson was struggling. The staidness and staleness of social convention were thus surpassed and opposed by the wave of new ideas, and Stevenson's involvement in this burgeoning upheaval is indicated by the incorporation of both of these ideas, as well as of his personal experiences during this period, into his work. Edinburgh, and all the restrictions it symbolised for the young Stevenson, are thus fictionally countered, as will be seen, by an opposing 'life of the senses', one that is clearly condemned by Puritanism.⁷⁷

This central influence on the nature of Stevenson's fiction was further expanded and developed by the interest which he later took in Scotland and its turbulent history. Consequently, this is often incorporated into the setting of his novels, several of which are historical in nature, and is important to the representation of the double, as will be demonstrated. Having been brought up on tales of the Covenanters, it is no surprise that the writer's interests should have turned in this direction; yet the more specific area of interest – one leading on from his own experiences of Edinburgh life – lay in the dividedness of Scotland as a nation. In 'The Foreigner at Home', Stevenson therefore focuses on Scotland as a land 'peopled from so many different stocks, babbling so many different dialects, and offering in its extent such singular contrasts, from the busiest over-population to the unkindest desert, from the Black Country to the Moor of Rannoch.'⁷⁸ This contrast is given a rather more immediate form in *Kidnapped*, where David within a few days suffers both the intense cold of his "island", and the heat of the baking sun.

⁷⁷ Binding, Paul, in the introduction to *Weir of Hermiston and Other Stories* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), p.14. This phrase shall henceforth be used to denote Stevenson's opposition to Puritanical Edinburgh and the social values that he associated with it.

⁷⁸ In *The Scottish Stories and Essays*, edited by Kenneth Gelder, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), p.233. All quotations from *The Scottish Stories and Essays* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

Language is identified as a symptom of this disunity, for despite the standardized English popularized overseas, Stevenson recognised the dialectal divergence that could occur within very short geographical distances, and which was inherited rather than enforced. The differences and oppositions which constituted the core of his interest also refer to his vision of the capital, for, like it, the diversity of Scotland's people further afield, as signified by dialect, determined the nature and continuance of 'local custom and prejudice, even local religion and local law' (*SSE*, p.233). The duality of Edinburgh is thus magnified in Stevenson's view of the fragmented nature of Scotland and its history. As Douglas Gifford points out, much of the nineteenth-century Scottish fiction stemming from the tradition of Sir Walter Scott treats the recurring themes of 'the divided self; the divided family which contains the broken self; the divided nation behind the fragmented family'.⁷⁹ The relationship between these various forms of disharmony is thus shown not only to be relevant to Stevenson's fiction, but more importantly, to have its roots in his early personal life.

The inclusion of historical events in Stevenson's work may be compared to Daphne du Maurier's fiction, for both take an interest in this as part of a more personal struggle for expression of the Self. Whereas du Maurier only draws on history as it affects her personally – that is to say, historical circumstances as they occurred either in relation to her ancestors or to her home, Menabilly – Stevenson attempts a broader outlook. While du Maurier's depictions of historical episodes are explored purely in their capacity of expanding her self-knowledge and sense of herself, the Scottish writer's ambitious portrayals strive, on the contrary, towards a more objective narrative of events. It may be said that he fails in this, however, for a strong personal perspective and interest

⁷⁹ 'Stevenson and Scottish Fiction: The Importance of *The Master of Ballantrae*', in *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland*, edited by Jenni Calder (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), p.69.

colours his undertaking, creating a continuous antithesis of convention and 'the life of the senses'. This latter is frequently interpreted as a romantic quality, and as such is often associated with the Highlander and his perceived characteristics. The Lowlander, in his allegiance to England, remains detached from this existence, and retains qualities of staidness and coolness, of reserve and heed to convention.

It is Stevenson's early personal divergence of allegiance that therefore leads more or less directly to an interest in the dual nature of Edinburgh, Scotland, its people, and indeed man himself. The present study proposes that almost all of his major work centres around these ideas and, furthermore, that drama arises from the tensions existing between the two states that they typify, which are invariably in conflict. This disharmony takes a literal form in the charting of either a physical or moral exploratory journey into an unknown realm, and accordingly converges with the delineation of romance narrative structure in *The Secular Scripture*, for such a journey corresponds to what is termed the 'ascent' stage of the narrative progression, one that constitutes the central body of Stevenson's narratives. Unsurprisingly, Stevenson's representation of this 'ascent' involves an attempted movement away from the capital and/or its system of values. The incorporation of Scotland and its history of events is a significant method of facilitating such a course, with movement taking place from the Lowlands to the unknown mysteries of the Highlands, yet the central metaphor remains one of a shift into 'the life of the senses'. Thus political, historical and social issues fuse with personal ones for Stevenson, and religion, patriarchy, Darwinism, and romance consistently find their way into seemingly unrelated narratives.

Since the 'life of the senses' is clearly a signifier of the desired 'ascent' into freedom and a state of integration of the narrative Self, it would at first appear that Stevenson does indeed adhere to the standard formula of the romance narrative. As will

become clear, however, this state of liberty and wholeness within the 'life of the senses' is soon uncovered as a false one, and the sense of imprisonment which is characteristic of the 'descent' state is thus retained. An assessment of the themes related to this formula as outlined in *The Secular Scripture* will reveal that this is a result of the authorial incapacity to define 'ascent' in a manner that detaches it from Scotland and Edinburgh, and their values.

2.2 Narratives of 'Descent'

Stevenson's work can be divided into four categories: the boy's adventure yarns, the so-called Scottish novels (several short stories can also be included under this heading), narratives that are set in the city, and finally Stevenson's South Seas tales. Although not always chronological, such a division charts more clearly the course of the author's ideas in relation to the influences described above, as will be demonstrated. Combining his desire to travel with a love of story-telling and adventure, Stevenson's writing career was truly launched with *Treasure Island*, his first novel, and a spontaneous piece of work produced in two bouts of approximately a fortnight each. This was, in his own words, 'a story for boys, no need for psychology or fine writing; and I had a boy at hand to be a touchstone. Women were excluded' ('My First Book: *Treasure Island*', *Essays*, p.453). Despite the fact that this was to all appearances purely a boy's fantasy tale, there are nevertheless several important points to be made which relate it to the author's more mature work. Even in a narrative so far removed from reality, the chief character, Long John Silver, was based on the author's friend, W. E. Henley. Taking him as an inspiration, Stevenson claimed that it was his intention

to deprive [Henley] of all his finer qualities and higher graces of temperament, to leave him with nothing but his strength, his courage, his quickness, and his magnificent geniality, and to try to express them in terms of the culture of a raw tarpaulin. (p.453)

It is clear early on, however, that Stevenson is unable to describe this character *entirely* deprived of his better qualities, for the pirate more than once exhibits genuine kindness and good-nature, wholly unmotivated by gain, towards Jim Hawkins. His favouring of Jim, as well as his friendly conversations with him, are indisputable instances of this.

It is important to observe, then, that qualities of doubling and deceptiveness, as well as of physical Otherness, are present from an extremely early stage in Stevenson's fiction, and will be developed more fully in later works like *The Master of Ballantrae*. Despite his desire to omit any need for 'psychology', the references to contradictory aspects of human nature suggest the extent to which Stevenson's experiences of duality had become incorporated into his view of the world and of people. Denying such a depiction would, one feels, render both characters and setting two-dimensional and unbelievable, just as many of the pirates in *Treasure Island* appear flat in comparison to their leader. As such, Long John is in many ways a prototype for Jekyll/Hyde, appearing alternately pleasant and likeable, then menacing and ruthless. Robert Kiely points out that Billy Bones and Blind Pew 'introduce separately the two apparently contradictory aspects of personality combined in Long John Silver': the surprisingly cruel and strong and the surprisingly weak.⁸⁰ Significantly, this highlights the close relationship between moral and physical being that typifies Stevenson's most famous pairing.

⁸⁰ Kiely, Robert, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), p.72.

Reflecting this divorce of characteristics, Stevenson never allows the conflicting sides of Long John to be present simultaneously, ensuring that they remain entirely independent of each other. Thus, in soliciting the Doctor's sympathy and future help, 'Silver was a changed man, once he was out there and had his back to his friends and the block-house; his cheeks seemed to have fallen in, his voice trembled; never was a soul more dead in earnest.'⁸¹ Soon afterwards, however, Silver is casting 'deadly looks' at Jim as they search for the treasure; indeed, 'his promise and the doctor's warning were things of the past; and [Jim] could not doubt that he hoped to seize upon the treasure, [...] cut every honest throat about that island, and sail away' (*TI*, p.179). The pirate's skillful assumption of the necessary persona is emphasised by Jim's disillusionment when he discovers that Silver's geniality cloaks treachery. An early example of the relationship between landscape and characters, the at first paradisaical island, like Silver, also proves to have a more unwholesome side, breeding disease and harbouring danger. This is signalled by the 'peculiar stagnant smell' as well as by the foliage, which has a 'poisonous brightness' (pp.70,69).

Several of Long John's sailors, like their leader, also exhibit signs of conflict, both of allegiance and of morals, one that proves fatal when they are murdered because of it. Stevenson does, however, make a distinction between those characters who are genuinely divided, and those – like Israel Hands, who feigns friendship to Jim only when he finds himself in danger – who only pretend to be so. He also confuses us in making Long John both of these, for he is willing to affect regard to reach his ends, but also has some true feelings of fellowship. It is probably this fact, together with the novel's purposeful dissociation from the real world, that ensures Long John's release from lawful

⁸¹ Stevenson, R. L., *Treasure Island*, edited with an introduction by Emma Letley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.166. All quotations from *Treasure Island* are taken from this edition. Subsequent

punishment at the end of the story, and averts the negative ending that characterises Stevenson's later works. The shifting narrative perceptions of the island, as well as the knowledge gained during the course of the voyage, suggest that Jim's journey is one of the imagination, a shift into the realm of dreams whereby a development of his character can take place. While the journey to the island is suggestive of a progression towards narrative 'ascent', therefore, it is characterised by qualities of 'descent', that is to say by restriction and imprisonment, and a discontinuity with reality. Its deceptive nature suggests, even at this early stage in Stevenson's career, the author's failure to distinguish a narrative 'ascent' unmarred by negative qualities. While the double is clearly involved, and a shift from a state of persecution on land to one of freedom and fortune at sea and on the island are suggested, the Edenic destination is only superficially wholesome, and both it and the ship prove hazardous. The artificial nature of the tale's conclusion, in which the villain retains his freedom, while much of the gold is squandered, thus supports the absence of an 'ascent' as dénouement.

Bridging the gap between the boy's adventure story and the historical perspective which the author imposes onto a novel like *The Master of Ballantrae*, *Kidnapped* incorporates both of these narrative qualities. Accordingly, the novel is also divided in two by the advent of one of the two chief characters, Alan Breck. Drawing on its forerunner, *Treasure Island*, the first section of the story is set largely at sea, and among corrupt sailors. The marked shift from this mode to one founded on historical events, on the other hand, heralds the direction of Stevenson's later novel. Both sections, however, exhibit more clearly the opposition between convention and the world of the senses. The extent to which this is associated with the physical body appears to relate to the ideas of Darwin, as well as externalising the psychological theories on the divided nature of man.

David Balfour's very first encounter upon his journeys reveals as much, when his uncle, a minor figure, struggles to keep his true character from David, and enacts the author's fascination with deception and the double identity: 'I could see him all trembling and twitching, like a man with palsy. But when he turned round, he had a smile upon his face.'⁸²

Such division of character is introduced once more on board the 'Covenant', where the two ship's mates appear to be opposing reflections of each other, Riach being small and fair, and Shuan tall, well-built and 'very black' (K, p.45). These two even take turns in sleeping in the same berth, and, like Dr Jekyll, take on the characteristics of their double after drinking. Thus

Mr Riach was sullen, unkind, and harsh when he was sober, and Mr Shuan would not hurt a fly except when he was drinking. I asked about the captain; but I was told drink made no difference upon that man of iron. (p.42)

Captain Hoseason indeed exemplifies a more subtle mixture of such opposing qualities, but, like the father-figures Stevenson frequently describes as '[men] of iron', the controlled exterior required to maintain his position of power renders the captain's true nature difficult to divine.

I wondered if it was possible that Ransome's stories [of the captain's cruelty] could be true, and half disbelieved them; they fitted so ill with the man's looks.

⁸² *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*, edited with an introduction by Emma Letley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.17. All quotations from *Kidnapped* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

But indeed, he was neither so good as I had supposed him, nor quite so bad as Ransome did. (p.35)

It is appropriate, given the conflicting qualities associated with the sea-faring life, that David's own double, Alan Breck, should virtually emerge from the sea after his vessel is shipwrecked. The sea is described by Frye as being a clear representation of the subterranean narrative underworld. While, as in *Treasure Island*, it appears at first to signify a path to liberation, David's experiences in the ship's hold – where he is imprisoned, seasick and in pain, with only the crashing sound of the storm and thick darkness around him – indicate otherwise. Again, therefore, the two stages of narrative progression are confused as characteristics of 'descent' are applied to what the narrative strives to portray as an 'ascent'.

With Alan Breck's entrance into the novel's world, the narrative begins its focus on the political climate of the period. It is clear that Stevenson took an exceptional interest in Scotland's history of self-division; the separation of the Scottish capital and the south-west in supporting the English monarchy, and the birth of Jacobitism in the Highlands are accordingly a central theme of *Kidnapped*. The religious differences that existed within Scotland were highlighted during Stevenson's upbringing, and much of Scotland's history was also romanticized. The feeling preceding the union of 1707 was one of general distrust from Scotland, and of fervent hatred from the Highlanders following the Massacre of Glencoe in 1692. The Union was thus entered into reluctantly, if necessarily, and the feelings of discontent continued when Scotland reaped little benefit, and had little say in Parliament. When, after his father's failure, Charles Edward or, as he is better known, "Bonnie Prince Charlie", routed the support of the Highlanders for the famous Forty-Five, the event, although a failure, was and is still remembered with

sentiment. Although Jacobitism soon died out, Stevenson, caught up in the romantic tales surrounding this period, and carrying on from Sir Walter Scott, portrays the wild Highlands as an area of dissent and turbulence, and the Highlanders as passionate Celts.

The antithetical stereotypes of Highlander and Lowlander are seized upon by Stevenson in his Scottish novels, and much of the drama in both *Kidnapped* and *The Master of Ballantrae* arises out of the fact that the two central characters either are, or embody the characteristics of Highlander and Lowlander. In this way, the threatening doubles on board the 'Covenant' are replaced by a double that promises self-integration, and an 'ascent' into wholeness and liberation by the "union" of the two.

The reader's perception of David Balfour as a somewhat weak and naive boy is already fixed when the dashing, worldly and brave Alan Breck appears on the scene. Several of Riach and Shuan's features are carried over here, for Alan's strength opposes David's frailty, just as his physical darkness overshadows the Lowlander's fairness. Alan's appearance in the text may even be construed as part of an initiation into adulthood and maturity for his companion, for it is only now that David's literal and metaphorical journeys begin in earnest. Like Jim Hawkins' travels, this will enable growth of the character through an intense association with Alan and the Highlands, and the qualities they symbolise. The alterable physical appearance that has been seen to signal the fragmentation of a single identity, like David's uncle's, or Long John Silver's, is separated in *Kidnapped* into two distinct opposites. An objective view of the characters is given with their description on bills issued for their capture, and here again the contrast and opposition is emphasised. Apart from stature and colouring, Alan's love of fine clothing clearly marks him out in the Highland wilderness. Sharing this vanity with James Durie, he sports 'a hat with feathers, a red waistcoat, breeches of black plush, and a blue coat with silver buttons and handsome silver lace' (p.50), suggesting not only

the flamboyance of the Highland character, but also a theatricality that is given expression in this "dressing up". The Otherness signalled by Alan's physical difference to the narrator is left in no doubt when David muses that this outward expression of his character is such 'as I supposed to have been only usual with women' (p.65). This feminine side, however, fails to detract from Alan's dominance and leadership, traits acknowledged by his companion, who follows Alan like 'a fiddler and his wife' (p.146).

Alan's Otherness is also signalled in other ways. David's constant likening of him to an animal supports the sense of his affinity with the land, and is thus invariably a positive delineation. This connection, however, is one that *The Secular Scripture* associates with 'descent', and hence anticipates this journey's failure to achieve wholeness. The identification of the character with an animal, something which is regarded as a key aspect in this formula, is clearly apparent here, where it is furthermore often presented in terms of a complete metamorphosis. Alan is accordingly 'as nimble as a goat' (p.50), runs at his enemies with the courage of 'a bull, roaring as he [goes]', and '[drives] them along the deck as a sheep-dog chases sheep' (p.61). Again, Alan and his opponent Macgregor face each other 'like strange dogs', and, in the escape to Ben Alder, Alan resorts to running 'on his hands and knees with an incredible quickness, as though it were his natural way of going' (pp.169, 143), even carrying David thus on his back. These associations certainly play a part in further allying Alan to the wild Highlands of which he is virtually an embodiment, the last perhaps even suggesting the Highland stag. The removal from the calls of convention that this journey through the Highlands signifies for David is thus strengthened by such imagery, drawing as it does so strongly on the ideas of Darwin. This imagery, while expressing Stevenson's, and his generation's, reaction to Darwinism, also exploits the contemporary interest in all things earthy and

primitive. As such, Alan's bond with nature is one that makes him entirely a victim of 'the life of the senses'.

While Alan shares his dark features with James Durie as well as Mr Hyde, he also shares their streak of evil, although this is little developed in the novel. His estrangement from Edinburgh's social values, as well as its implicit condemnation of a character such as his, is implied when the Lowlander judges that his hero's eyes 'had a kind of dancing madness in them, that was both engaging and alarming' (p.50); and, again, Alan is described by him as 'smiling evilly' by the starlight (p.163). The two characters are opposed not only by appearance, personality and ability, but more succinctly by that which is symbolised by them – the political, cultural, religious and moral divide of Highland and Lowland. The journey charted by the novel initially suggests David's 'descent' through the change in social position following the death of his father, and the accompanying geographical displacement. This leads directly to his experiences on the 'Covenant'. With Alan's appearance, however, a reversal is signalled by the shift into the 'life of the senses' which is thrust upon David when he ventures into the Highlands. During this time, the difference in kind between the two travellers gives rise to a tension that can be interpreted as a manifestation of the author's own struggle with the diverging facets of his desires and identity, here given shape through the imposed characteristics of Highlander and Lowlander.

The fact that the central doubling in *Kidnapped* refers finally to a rift within a single identity is highlighted by the characters themselves: David longs to desert his companion and yet is unable to do so, while Alan is later not to be separated from David during his illness, despite the great danger that this entails. Alan, speaking to his companion, realises that although

there are whiles [...] when ye are altogether too canny and Whiggish to be company for a gentleman like me [...] there are other whiles when ye show yoursel' a mettle spark; and it's then, David, that I love ye like a brother. (p.142)

The remarkable closeness of the two characters surpasses the bounds of their friendship, such as it is, and is certainly intimately linked to their Scottish blood. In 'A Foreigner at Home', the author states quite categorically that

[i]n spite of the difference of blood and language, the Lowlander feels himself the sentimental countryman of the Highlander. When they meet abroad, they fall upon each others' necks in spirit; even at home there is a clannish intimacy in their talk. But from his compatriot in the south the Lowlander stands consciously apart [...]; and even though his tongue acquire the Southern knack, he will still have a strong Scots accent of the mind. (*SSE*, p.241)

Stevenson here allies the two whom he opposes in his fiction, supporting the idea of an intentional fictional conflict outlining and anticipating a desire for integration and unity. This is further affirmed by the physical and moral journey undertaken in *Kidnapped*, one that reaches its conclusion in Edinburgh, where Alan's dominance dwindles with the reversal of values indicated by the geographical shift. This reversal, occurring as soon as the two cross the Highland Line, is heralded by the first argument that takes place between them.

Once in the Lowlands, there are remarkable changes. The two travellers encounter only fine weather and cultivated fields, and have plenty of food and water. Having reached the heart of this tamed land, the estrangement from his Lowland Self

which David has experienced is symbolised physically by the barrier of the Forth, which comes to represent the actual line of division between the two Davids – one a wealthy heir, the other a hunted criminal:

There was Mr. Rankeillor's house on the south shore, where I had no doubt wealth awaited me; and here was I upon the north, clad in poor enough attire of an outlandish fashion, with three silver shillings left to me of all my fortune, a price set upon my head, and an outlawed man for my sole company. (p.177)

The once satisfactory clothes are now 'outlandish', the money he had had no use for now glaringly little, and his former hero merely 'an outlawed man'. The vanity that appears to signal an assertion of identity is also now his, for, once safe in Mr Rankeillor's house (having deposited Alan behind some bushes!), David immediately 'ma[kes] what change I could in my appearance; and blithe was I to look in the glass and find the beggar-man a thing of the past, and David Balfour come to life again' (p.191).

The importance of the journey in this novel is enforced by Mr Rankeillor's comment that '[t]his is a great epic, a great Odyssey of yours' (p.189). Just as the epic genre often presents the physical or metaphorical death of a close companion as a symbol of the hero's attainment of wholeness, the journey here has now become David's adventure, and he the leading figure. This ending sounds falsely, however, and remains unsatisfactory. Alan's swift disappearance from the novel's action supposedly heralds David's attainment of wholeness, yet the standards by which David judges the completion of his journey clearly indicate that the qualities of Highland life have *not* been incorporated into his character. Consequently, the ending constitutes a return to the values of the Lowland and the city, and a denial of David's Highland experiences, and is

a state that meets with neither the reader's nor the writer's approval. Indeed, later narratives support the negative associations of the city with an underworld made up of values that prevent the integration and expression of the Self, as will be demonstrated.

The tone of Stevenson's early adventure stories becomes more serious and psychologically complex in *The Master of Ballantrae*, his most mature Scottish novel, and accordingly a much darker tale. Here again, the historical background to the story is vital, and, as Emma Letley observes in her introduction to the book, it 'enables Stevenson to give a far-reaching context to his theme of division [...]: divisions in one family mirror divisions in Scottish society that had existed since the sixteenth century and continued after the Union of 1707'.⁸³ It is as a reflection of the political circumstances, therefore, that the two central characters are distinguished and divided by their qualities of Highland Tory and Lowland Whig. Perhaps inspired by Scott's dark and fair sisters in *The Heart of Midlothian*, James and Henry are brothers, divided by personal as well as familial and political allegiances. The tension ensuing from this rivalry is accentuated by the characters' relationship and physical proximity, both qualities that reflect the brotherhood and opposition existent between Highlander and Lowlander.

James, like his forerunner Alan Breck, is a dark and charming character, attributed with many qualities romantically associated with the Highlander. He is thus also virtually indistinguishable from Northmour in 'The Pavilion on the Links', a short story that also juxtaposes two men who embody characteristics of Highlander and Lowlander. Northmour is 'tall, strong, and active; his hair and complexion very dark; his features handsomely designed, but spoiled by a menacing expression' which suggests that he is 'filled with the devil' (*SSE*, pp.31, 23). In the same way, James Durie is an

⁸³ Stevenson, R. L., *The Master of Ballantrae: A Winter's Tale*, edited with an introduction by Emma Letley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p.xii. All quotations from *The Master of Ballantrae* are

embodiment of values that directly challenge those of the Edinburgh bourgeoisie, and as such he is also repeatedly represented as the devil, a destroyer of traditional righteousness. It is probably with such intentions that Stevenson modelled James with this characteristic as a central feature, for it is clear that the character was perceived early on as 'all I know of the devil' (*Letters*, vol.VI, Dec.1887, p.87). Despite, or perhaps because of, this streak of evil, James is without doubt a greatly appealing figure to virtually all who know him, a portrayal that draws heavily on the author's Calvinistic background, which preaches that evil should be sought for where it is least expected, an idea also at the heart of James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. The most forthright parallels of James to the devil occur, consequently, when he is with Alexander, his young nephew, whose childish innocence makes him an ideal target for James' wily arts. During these interactions, the child becomes Eve to James' "serpent", accentuating the latter's evil through the comparison. The boy is also the recipient of Henry and Mackellar's tales of 'how there was a man [Henry] whom the devil tried to kill, and how near he came to kill the devil instead' (*MB*, p.140). This satanic quality of the darker brother, who is characterised as a "Highlander", indicates the fall which his company involves. While he, like Alan Breck, embodies the 'life of the senses' that is symbolic of the liberation of the Self for Stevenson, the author undercuts this by installing the religious Mackellar as narrator. Mackellar's judgementalism throws a negative light onto the 'life of the senses', which consequently becomes a 'descent' instead of an 'ascent', as Stevenson once again confuses the two stages for the reader.

The influence of Hogg's *Confessions* on the religious aspect of *The Master of Ballantrae* is manifestly clear in a parallel episode. Repeating the memorable scene on a cliff, where the supposed distortion of shadows in the mist creates a monstrous image

before the protagonist of *Confessions*, Mackellar experiences a similar vision. Aboard the vessel bound for America, and accompanied only by James, he observes how

[n]ow [the master's] head would be in the zenith and his shadow fall quite beyond the [ship] on the farther side; and now he would swing down till he was underneath my feet, and the line of the sea leaped high above him like the ceiling of a room. I looked upon this with a growing fascination, as birds are said to look on snakes. (p.183)

The suggestion of devilry cast upon this event by the God-fearing servant reflects the deep religious bias of the narrator's judgements, and affirms their unreliable subjectivity. James' Otherness is thus actively coloured by the narrative in this way, suggesting the ostracism risked by those who deviated from the path determined by the religious hegemony.

James' ability to charm is also perceived through the diabolical appropriation of vocabulary, one used to heighten the reader's sense of his two-sidedness, for James' manipulation of dialect in order to ingratiate himself to others is presented almost as a form of shape-changing:

Never a harsh word fell from him, never a sneer showed upon his lip. He had laid aside even his cutting English accent, and spoke with the kindly Scots tongue, that set a value on affectionate words; and though his manners had a graceful elegance mighty foreign to our ways in Durrisdeer, it was still a homely courtliness, that did not shame but flatter us. (pp.86-87)

In a similar manner, James tortures his brother by double-edged or whispered comments, and when they are alone through more outright verbal brutality. Emma Letley devotes a chapter to the subject of dialect as used by Stevenson in *From Galt to Douglas Brown*, in which she highlights its role in emphasising division and illustrating 'the dual nature and diabolic aspects' of many characters.⁸⁴

Henry Durie is developed in a manner that opposes him to his brother's character – although the narrator's sympathy and allegiance lie with him, he is staid, reliable and forbearing, as well as socially awkward and somewhat boring in comparison to his brother. J. R. Hammond suggests that the pair may represent elements of their author's own character, 'the dichotomy between the two sides of Stevenson's own nature – the one intellectual, undemonstrative, orderly; the other worldly, emotional, adventurous.'⁸⁵ This theory would appear to be supported not only by Henry's physical frailty following the brothers' duel, but more significantly by Stevenson's likening of himself to James Durie. That he should only compare himself to the overtly controversial character is significant, and suggests the nature of the author's desires. His longing for a more vibrant existence, one that fully incorporated the 'life of the senses', and which was frowned upon by the Edinburgh set, is also apparent in the transposition of his yearning to travel onto Henry, who must witness his brother's voyaging while he himself is bound by duty to remain at home. The significance of the journey to the author's conception of the novel can be gauged by the fact that Stevenson referred to it as one of the starting-points of the tale, as his letters to E. L. Burlingame prove (*Letters*, vol.VI, Dec.1887, p.81, and Jan.1888, p.100). The imposition of Stevenson's own desires onto this otherwise historical tale

⁸⁴ Letley, Emma, *From Galt to Douglas Brown: Nineteenth-Century Fiction and Scots Language* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1988), p.158.

⁸⁵ Hammond, J. R., *A Robert Louis Stevenson Companion: A Guide to the Novels, Essays and Short Stories* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1984), p.153.

brings them more sharply into focus, especially since his actual situation and his longed-for dreams are enacted in such an extreme fictional way by the competing brothers. Through such a depiction, Stevenson unites yet simultaneously keeps separate these two facets of the identity, investing one with the traditional staleness of social acceptability, and the other with the veiled and condemned rebellion of the romantic hero.

While Henry's restricted circle of movement within the novel indicates all too well the physical and intellectual confinement that the author associated with the Edinburgh clique, James' attractiveness, adjudged wicked, even demonic, by the elderly servant, is imbued with qualities of the idealised dreams of the imagination. This is illustrated by his participation in one of Scotland's primary historical battles, as well as his flamboyance, Byronic looks, cunning intelligence, and capability. While he personifies those qualities which the author finds desirable, and leads a free existence of sensual self-indulgence, the narrative viewpoint strongly associates his character with a 'descent'. In terms of narrative progression, then, the heightened religious perspective of the novel is unable to present James' liberty as an 'ascent', and the ultimate death of the two brothers fixes the narrative more unambiguously in a physical as well as a moral underworld.

The nucleus around which the novel's action takes place is clearly a patriarchal one, as the power and presence of the physically frail and ailing father suggest. While the restriction that such a system enforces is witnessed in Henry's situation, the nature of its power is suggested by the inheritance of an estate and a position which become points of rivalry, and also by the need for acceptability. Thus, while James' wickedness is left in no doubt, it is kept from his father's knowledge. The place of the two brothers within this system is again made clear when a coin, spun to decide their fates, and symbolising the indestructible unity between Henry and James as "two sides of the same coin", is flung

through the family shield emblazoned on the window, a mark that remains present throughout the course of the narrative. Stevenson's condemnation of such a patriarchal system is signalled by the father's continued preference, despite Henry's dutiful conformance and the existence of James' less appealing qualities, for the profligate son. Accordingly, it is only following the patriarch's death that movement – that is to say, the *possibility* of 'ascent' – for Henry is introduced, and he journeys across the Atlantic, only, of course, to be haunted by his Other, in an echo of both Poe's and Hogg's tales. Liberation is denied in this way, for despite the shift away from the values of restriction and the family home, James' presence cannot be banished, and the sense of suffocation is reinstated in the stifling forests where the novel's action concludes, the forest being identified by Frye as a manifestation of the dark underworld of 'descent'.

Fate and Providence are set in opposition in *The Master of Ballantrae*, and serve to enforce the discord between traditional religious values and those of the Other. While Fate, as a signifier of the predominance of the Other, is the inescapable force that drives Wilkie Collins', and to a lesser extent, Daphne du Maurier's, narratives forward, a religious outline is imposed upon Stevenson's narratives, undermining the success of the life of the Other. This is made clear in the terms used to define the brothers' relationship both to each other and to their father. An open comparison to Jacob and Esau is made in James' taunts as he accuses his brother of trying to 'trip up my heels', and addresses him in their father's presence as '*Hairry lad*' (*MB*, pp.13, 88). This parallel, like the biblical story, not only centralises the position and influence of the ailing patriarch, but places it within the context of inheritance. Indeed, James' departure to war may even be equated to Esau's hunting trip, from which he returns to find his place usurped by the younger brother. The violence of the rivalry between the two Duries for their father's favour also of course likens them to Cain and Abel. The dependence on a religious scheme is thus

presented in an unmistakable way, and accordingly serves to predetermine the failure of a wholeness and freedom of the Self.

Many speculations have been made as to why the ending of *The Master of Ballantrae*, unable to sustain the impact and power of the rest of the body of the narrative, appears to fail. This is partly due to the fact that the action is removed from Scotland, and seems contrived and false. Stevenson's own travels in America and the Pacific during this period coincide with this sense of displacement, and are possibly the cause for the author's loss of interest in the later stages of the novel. The introduction towards the end of the narrative of Secundra Dass, James' Indian second Self and servant (Emma Letley points out the 'spiritual connection' (p.xix) between the two, affirmed by the sharing of a foreign language) accordingly heralds the safe employment of a traditional scheme, as Henry is pursued by the pair across the Atlantic. Here, the culminating scene suggests a reprisal of Poe's images of live burial, as well as of the simultaneous deaths of the twins in 'The Fall of the House of Usher', as Henry and James share the moment of death. The alteration of the two brothers' characters in the second half of the book anticipates some form of unification by rendering them more like one another, yet this is a misguided anticipation of wholeness.

With the appropriation of a Scottish background into the narrative, Stevenson has moved away from the idealistic representation of tales such as *Treasure Island*. In the context of Scotland, religion and patriarchy which becomes increasingly a part of the author's treatment of the double, integration of the Self becomes more and more improbable. The death of both brothers in *The Master of Ballantrae* thus confirms the ending of the narrative as a negative one in this context.

Although the central concern with the opposing pulls of restriction and liberty which forms the core of the novel is clearly one relating to the power of the father-figure,

and by extension to a religious background, this is an aspect that is explored to far greater depth in those novels and stories set (whether directly or by insinuation) in Edinburgh. In tales in which the father-figure must necessarily assume a more subsidiary role, the dichotomy generated by him is transposed onto the landscape, where it manifests itself in a new way. The most important factor in this portrayal is that of man's relationship to the sea, and the qualities symbolised by it. Paralleling the manner in which a religious referential background precludes the possibility of 'ascent', the sea, which, as has been noted, also falls into the category of a subterranean underworld, grounds the narrative in a state of 'descent'.

Stevenson's fascination with the sea is obvious in the narrative preoccupation with sea-faring, piracy and adventure at sea (scenes which are often more lively and realistic than the rest of the narrative), and is one that originates from his own early experiences. In the essay 'The Education of an Engineer', Stevenson claims that the career intended for him by his father – to carry on in the elder's footsteps as a lighthouse engineer – in no way appealed to him. Instead, he claims that 'only one thing in connection with the harbour tempted me, and that was the diving, an experience I burned to taste of' (*SSE*, p.270). Stevenson did indeed manage to dive, and gives an account of the experience as having made a deep impression on him. Importantly, that which stands out in the report is the diver's perception of the stark divide between the worlds of land and sea. Accordingly, on his descent, weighed down by a heavy suit and helmet, he recalls that 'I was cut off in a moment from my fellow-man; standing there in their midst, but quite divorced from intercourse: a creature deaf and dumb, pathetically looking forth upon them from a climate of his own'. Stevenson's divorce from the reality he had been a part of only seconds before is further emphasised by his description of a world eerily dark, yet also beautiful: '[s]ome twenty rounds below the platform, twilight fell. Looking

up, I saw a low green heaven, mottled with vanishing bells of white; looking around [...] nothing but a green gloaming, somewhat opaque but very restful and delicious' (p.272). Perception is turned on its head as 'heaven' becomes relocated in the surface of the sea above him, a layer that distorts both light and vision. The diver's ascent is subsequently almost surreal, a passing from one world, time and place to another, in a precedent to the representation of the succession of colours that enables Dr Jekyll's entry into another Self:

Of a sudden, my ascending head passed into the trough of a swell. Out of the green, I shot at once into a glory of rosy, almost sanguine light – the multitudinous seas incardined, the heaven above a vault of crimson. And then the glory faded into the hard, ugly daylight of a Caithness autumn, with a low sky, a grey sea, and a whistling wind. (p.274)⁸⁶

The fantastic swirl of colour, and the elation and mysterious appeal of the sea is counterbalanced, however, by the author's sudden realisation of the danger that any diver must risk, for he is trapped in his bulky suit, unable to communicate the nature of any danger he may be in.

The sense of latent menace touched upon in this account is taken up in Stevenson's fiction, where the sea becomes explicitly associated with the darker side of human nature, with the supernatural, and with hell itself, and is thus a clear signifier of a narrative underworld. It is appropriate in this respect that those characters typified not only by their blackness and evil streak, but also by the appeal of their nature, are often

⁸⁶ The reference to 'the multitudinous seas incardined' has been borrowed by Stevenson from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*: 'Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood/ Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather/ The multitudinous seas incardine,/ Making the green one red.' (2, ii, 60-63).

strongly associated with the sea. Long John Silver is the first of these, more at home at sea than on land, and elicits both attraction and fear from the young David. Captain Hoseason in *Kidnapped* is another example, for 'in fact, he was two men, and left the better one behind as soon as he set foot on board his vessel' (p.35). Alan Breck's appearance in the same novel is also significant, as he literally appears out of the sea, as David's other and darker half. The most memorable description of James Durie in *The Master of Ballantrae* is likewise given on his arrival at the estate by boat, when, having disembarked, he is seen 'standing alone upon the point of rock, a tall slender figure of a gentleman, habited in black'. A minute description of his appearance and flamboyant and expensive outfit follows, one that is made even more remarkable by its inappropriateness, for Mackellar 'wondered the more to see him in such a guise when he was but newly landed from a dirty smuggling lugger' (p.82). James' connection with the sea is continued in his experiences aboard a pirate ship, where, having been taken prisoner, he quickly overthrows the barbarous captain and assumes his place with an ease that identifies him clearly as a character whose mysterious powers are related to the sea. While Mackellar and Secundra Dass are later virtually incapacitated by seasickness on the voyage to America, therefore, it is unsurprising that James should experience no discomfort. The distorting and surreal quality associated with the sea by Stevenson in his essay, and the close relationship between it and the dark characters in the novels and stories, establishes this as a region related through the motif of the double to the Other. In addition, these associations place it in the realm of the 'life of the senses' so appealing to the author. Although representative of the freedom of the Self in this respect, it is also infused with religious references and imagery, for instance in the attribution of devilishness to those characters related to it. The inability to dissociate the 'life of the

senses' from a religious referential background thus challenges and precludes the possibility of a successful 'ascent' in the narratives.

The text dealing most directly and exclusively with such associations is the powerful short story, 'The Merry Men'. Here, the protagonist Charles', dive to explore a wrecked ship is clearly reminiscent of Stevenson's own dive, for, on resurfacing, 'the bright water swam before [Charles'] eyes in a glory of crimson' (SSE, p.118). The enchantment of this first dive is however gradually replaced by a recognition that the sea, as well as being a romantic place of secrecy, also contains immense and threatening powers, and is furthermore 'a place of ambushes'. As this realisation dawns upon the narrator, 'a great change passed [...] over the appearance of the bay [...] A breeze, I suppose, had flawed the surface, and a sort of trouble and blackness filled its bosom, where flashes of light and clouds of shadow tossed confusedly together' (p.119). Ominous religious overtones continue as this shift becomes more marked. Having discovered a human bone in the wreck, signs of the end of the world begin to appear, and the sea is transformed from its former self into 'the charnel ocean' (p.183). This manifestation of the sea's dark powers is accompanied and accentuated by the advent of a storm that approaches with startling rapidity, blotting out the sun and casting a dark shadow over the earth beneath. These ominous signs emphasise not only the sense of the sea's Otherness – of the darkness and superstition concerning it – but also present this in a manner that places it within a context of *religious fear*. It is this interpretation, like the devilishness of his dark characters, that suggests the author's inability to dissociate the imaginary and sensuous life from a religious condemnation.

What Stevenson attempts in 'The Merry Men', then, is not so much a charting of events, but an interpretation of religious and superstitious beliefs, as imposed by the locals onto the sea as Other. The primary character through whom this vision is achieved

is Gordon Darnaway, the uncle whom the narrator, Charles, has come to visit, and whose sanity is constantly in question. Yet, as the author averred, the 'uncle himself is not the story as I see it; only the leading episode of that story. It's a story of wrecks, as they appear to a dweller on the coast. *It's a view of the sea*' (*Letters*, vol.III, July 1881, p.213, my italics). Although Gordon Darnaway's perception of the ocean is only given due force by the covert sympathy between uncle and nephew, who are in some fashion distorting mirrors of one another (a fact ultimately expressed by Charles' narrow escape from the sea's fatal clutches, and Gordon's defeat by it), it is the representation of landscape that draws out this doubling, and imparts the power of the sea as underworld.

The close juxtaposition of sea and land is one that is enforced by the negative inversion and distortion of tangible reality into something monstrous and unwholesome, even deadly. Gordon Darnaway exclaims:

Do ye think, man, that there's naething in a' yon saut wilderness o' a world oot wast there, wi' the sea-grasses growin', an' the sea-beasts fechtin', an' the sun glintin' down into it, day by day? Na; the sea's like the land, but fearsomer. If there's folk ashore, there's folk in the sea – deid they may be, but they're folk whatever; and as for deils, there's nane that's like the sea-deils. There's no sae muckle harm in the land-deils, when a's said and done. (*SSE*, p.109)

Affirming the relationship between the two characters, Charles has already made a similar observation in a more objective and therefore more acceptable manner, when he had noticed granite rocks

[going] down together in troops into the sea, like cattle on a summer's day. There they stand, for all the world like their neighbours ashore; only the salt water sobbing between them instead of the quiet earth, and clots of sea-pink blooming on their sides instead of heather; and the great sea-conger to wreath about the base of them instead of the poisonous viper of the land. (p.101)

The simultaneous likening and opposing of sea and land is one that is also briefly touched upon in *Kidnapped*, when the dangerous position of the two heroes is highlighted by the imagery of an impending wreck: thus '[t]he trees clung upon the slope, like sailors on the shroud of a ship; and their trunks were like the rounds of a ladder by which we mounted' (*K*, p.148). Connotations of danger are even more explicit in 'The Merry Men', where they assume an extreme religious form in consistent comparisons and associations of the ocean to hell. To Gordon Darnaway, indeed, the sea not only has the qualities of, but *is* hell, despite his reasoning to the contrary:

why the Lord should hae made yon unco water is mair than ever I could win to understand. He made the vales and the pastures, and the bonny green yaird, the halesome, canty land [...] if it wasna prentit in the Bible, I was whiles be temp't to think it wasna the Lord, but the muckle, black deil that made the sea [...] a muckle yett [*gate*] to hell! (*SSE*, p.108)

His behaviour later on during the storm, indeed, is ample proof of this conviction, although Honor Mulholland's claim that the terror Gordon Darnaway associates with the sea is only a projection of his internal guilt is unconvincing.⁸⁷ As Stevenson intended, it

⁸⁷Mulholland, Honor, 'Robert Louis Stevenson and the Romance Form', in *Robert Louis Stevenson*, edited by Andrew Noble (London: Vision Press, 1983), p.107.

is the sea that plays the dominant role in this tale, exerting its power over the characters; its threatening and supernatural nature is affirmed by the employment of a narrator whose sanity and objectivity are *not* doubted. To view the powerful presentation of the sea in this tale as merely the projection of the character's unstable mind is thus to undercut the author's intention of making it, and not Gordon Darnaway, the central "identity" in 'The Merry Men'. This is not to deny the existence of the uncle's inner corruption, however, for it is this very fact that attracts him so strongly to this particular aspect of the sea, and holds him in awe of its destructive force. If it were not sinful, he would not care for the pleasure of its fascination, he avers, likening himself to one of the Merry Men, and a devil who is on the side of the sea rather than on the side of the sailors whom it destroys (p.132). The identification of the sea as a region of the dark underworld in terms of narrative structure is important here, for it clarifies Stevenson's desire to represent an overwhelming presence – one that is inescapable in the narrative – of a dark force that holds Gordon Darnaway captive. No 'ascent' is presented in the tale, which does not continue past Charles' departure from this setting, and the indulgence in a sensuous life is once more censured.

The story of the black man who haunts the pages of 'The Merry Men' is significant in this context, for he is said to emerge out of the sea, and heralds doom. As a sort of ghost, he is both the result of Scottish superstition, and the embodiment of the dark and mysterious powers of the sea. Gordon Darnaway, whose fear of this deadly figure is equal to his awe of the ocean, meets his death when he is chased into the surf by an unidentified black man. A black man likewise appears in another short story dealing with Scottish superstition, 'Thrawn Janet', in which a man, 'black as hell', supposedly possesses Janet's body (SSE, p.75). Indeed, this dark familiar can even be observed in *The Master of Ballantrae* in James Durie's Indian companion, Secundra Dass, who

remains immovably by James' side, an indirect personification of the devil's black familiar. The representation of superstition in 'The Tale of Tod Lapraik' is also relevant to this idea, for Tod is observed across the water on his island, where he is possessed by some evil force, and is said to be experiencing a joy altogether on a different plane to human emotion. This 'joy o' hell' as he 'danc[es] a' they hours by his lane in the black glory of his heart' is one distinctly similar to that which awakens in Gordon Darnaway as he watches the dancing of the Merry Men (*SSE*, p.201). It is deduced that such a measure of joyfulness, however, can only have been attained by Tod through selling his soul to the devil in yet another vivid reminder of Hogg's *Confessions*. The subterranean underworld, connected as it is with burial, insanity and death, as well as with the sea, is ultimately triumphant in these tales. Although used as a primary impetus for the representation of the devil's familiar, superstition is nevertheless clearly invested with the values of Presbyterian theology, as well as with the exclusion enforced by it upon those who operate beyond its principles. The impact of Stevenson's disagreements with his father, as well as his recognition of the invisible boundaries of acceptability instituted by Edinburgh morality, thus filter through into these stories, where the distinction between Self and Other is still the primary concern. This dichotomy, although imposed on landscape and superstitious beliefs, clearly maintains its strong religious basis, one interpreted and coloured by the author's early experiences.

As one might expect, it needs little effort to involve the religious theme more directly in narrative of the novels and tales which are set in Edinburgh itself. In many ways a condensed form of Scotland, Edinburgh exemplifies not only the charm and appeal, but also the self-division of the country. It was perhaps Stevenson's proximity to the rigidity of the city's values that invests these stories with a strong sense of hypocrisy, an element that remains absent from his references to Scotland as a whole. These

narratives, then, are more particularly relevant to the present study, for by setting them in Edinburgh as the heart of the moral and religious hypocrisy that spells restriction, the author more pointedly expresses a sense of groundedness within the system. As already mentioned, Edinburgh's physical divide into respectable and disreputable areas was one often traversed by Stevenson in his youth, as he became a participant in both spheres, aware of both 'the foul smells and the fine clothes' (K, p.208), and noticing ever more clearly the disparity between the two sectors. This knowledge forced itself upon him not only through the visual discrepancy – a 'barbaric display of contrasts to the eye' – but also by a realisation that the city was but a model for human nature itself: thus 'the whole city leads a double existence; [...] like the King of the Black Isles, it is half alive and half a monumental marble.'⁸⁸ The association of individual with environment in this way implies that the 'double life' of the city often gave rise to the internal conflict and duality of its inhabitants; as a result, Edinburgh is the chosen setting for many of Stevenson's tales of division.

A marked characteristic of Stevensonian Edinburgh, and one that is in addition a quality of his most mature Scottish novel, *The Master of Ballantrae*, is the sense of an encroaching darkness. While this clearly characterises an underworld, it also bore more personal significance for Stevenson. Childhood associations with darkness, ones that left a profound impression on him, begin to place it in context, for they were strongly related to a sense of malaise. Alison Cunningham, the child's nurse, would carry Stevenson, often ill and sleepless, to the window to see other lighted ones, 'where also, we told each other, there might be sick little boys and their nurses, waiting, like us, for the morning'

⁸⁸ Stevenson, R. L., 'Edinburgh', in *The Lantern-Bearers and Other Essays*, with an introduction by Jeremy Treglown (London: Chatto & Windus, 1988), pp.90, 89. All quotations from *The Lantern-Bearers and Other Essays* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

(*Letters*, introduction to vol.I, May 1873, p.84). By adulthood, a new association had been established, one that is evident in Stevenson's statement towards the end of his life in Samoa: '[d]aily I see the sunrise out of my bed, which I still value as a tonic, a perpetual tuning fork, a look of God's face once in a day' (*Letters*, vol.VIII, June 1894, pp.304-5). Consequently, it is sunlight which is increasingly absent from his work involving the double identity, and which becomes indicative of a loss of God.

The image of the lamp-lit city accordingly becomes one that features heavily in the vision of Edinburgh. Paul Coates observes that the 'city of white night' in Dostoyevsky's fiction is 'the archetype of the wondrous illuminated nineteenth-century city, whose newly installed street-lamps turn the night into day', but its presence in Stevenson's work is also significant.⁸⁹ The recent introduction of the street-lamp, although a valid enough reason for its inclusion in his texts, nevertheless remains an unsatisfactory explanation for its overwhelming prominence. Its contribution to an atmosphere of 'something abnormal and misbegotten'⁹⁰ is perhaps closer to the mark, for this is a suggestion of the inversion of the laws of nature, and a fitting environment for the double whose very existence, while on the surface repudiating the laws of both religion and tradition, ultimately enforces their hypocrisy and restrictions on the Self. Hyde is consequently associated with

a part of town where there was literally nothing to be seen but lamps. Street after street, and all the folks asleep – street after street, all lighted up as if for a procession, and all as empty as a church (JH, p.231)

⁸⁹ *The Double and the Other: Identity as Ideology in Post-Romantic Fiction* (London: Macmillan Press, 1988), p.39.

⁹⁰ *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Weir of Hermiston*, edited with an introduction by Emma Letley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.56. All quotations from 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically

The creature who roams through these 'lamplit streets, in [...] [a] divided ecstasy of mind', and fully capable of breaking every commandment, is also depicted literally as well as figuratively as a black one (p.70).

Blackness is conferred onto the figure of the Other more generally, and comes to characterise it. Hence James Durie, the Master of Ballantrae, is a character whose 'black dissimulation' is paralleled by his black clothing (*MB*, p.10). This quality is also an integral part of his attraction, however – of his 'handsome figure and countenance, swarthy, lean, long, with a quick, alert, black look' (p.82). Blackness is also powerfully suggestive of Otherness in the form of the uncanny, and of death-in-life – James' ever-present yet invisible 'shadow' is thus interpreted through a superstitious/religious perspective as 'spectral' and a 'phantom' (pp.23, 31, 179, 38). The black Other of the night is in this way rendered more clearly the opposer and recessive double of the upstanding and faultless citizen.

The consistent association of the city with values that suppress an inherent part of man's nature is witnessed early on in Stevenson's writing career in his fascination, dating from school-days, with the life of William (or Deacon) Brodie, Edinburgh's infamous impostor. A cabinet-maker by day, Brodie turned thief by night, and was finally betrayed by one of his confederates, and hanged in 1788. It was the discrepancy between these "two" lives that interested Stevenson, as his play, co-written with W. E. Henley, clearly illustrates. Effectively embodying the dual character of Edinburgh, Brodie could almost have been one of Stevenson's own creations, for he unites the personas of respected Deacon and common thief. The play, *Deacon Brodie or The Double Life*, explores the object of the author's interest. By dramatising the story, Stevenson is able to introduce

several peripheral ideas through which the central feature is placed more clearly in context. The play thus opens not only with a discussion of the mysterious burglaries plaguing the town, but also of the forthcoming elections. Although not pursued, political and by extension social opposition plays an important part in setting the scene for Brodie's own inner struggles. Scottish politics were also of course to play a significant role later on in the framework of *Kidnapped* and *The Master of Ballantrae*, in which they operate as a force dividing the two central characters.

Other themes also find their origins in *Deacon Brodie*. The transforming power of alcohol is one, for drink is used as a catalyst to precipitate change in purpose as well as in action. The Deacon, having attempted to burgle his friend Walter Leslie's house, an act which will lead to his undoing, thus proclaims, '[i]f I'd not been drunk, and in my tantrums, you'd never have got my hand within a thousand years of such a job.'⁹¹ In this, *Deacon Brodie* also anticipates the chemical medium of transformation in 'Jekyll and Hyde', for Jekyll refers to his compulsion to take the draught as the compulsion of a drunkard towards drink, while Hyde toasts the man he has just murdered as he prepares the concoction (pp.69, 70). Vladimir Nabokov has commented on the 'delightful winey taste' about 'Jekyll and Hyde', observing that wine is closely related in the text to the patriarchal circle – to friendship, intimacy, indoor warmth, and conversation.⁹² These implications are inverted by Jekyll, however, who employs his own liquid, 'which was at first of a reddish hue' (JH, p.58), for an entirely different purpose – to divide rather than to unite, and to break down rather than to reinforce the traditional structure.

⁹¹ Stevenson, R. L., *Deacon Brodie or The Double Life*, in *The Plays of W. E. Henley and R. L. Stevenson* (London: Heinemann, 1907), p.29. All quotations from *Deacon Brodie* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

⁹² Nabokov, Vladimir, *Lectures on Literature*, edited by Fredson Bowers, with an introduction by John Updike (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), p.180.

The extent to which the true Self is released through this medium is suggested by a reference by Stevenson, albeit partly in jest, to his own dependency on alcohol. Ordered to abstain for the sake of his health, he writes that

I am now shorn of my grog for ever. My last habit – my last pleasure – gone. *I am myself no more*. Of that lean, feverish, voluble and whiskyfied young Scot, who once sparked through France and Britain, bent on art and the pleasures of the flesh, there now remains no quality but the strong language. (*Letters*, vol.IV, March 1884, p.249, my italics)

The repeated description of the figure of the Other as 'lean' (both James Durie and Edward Hyde are given this epithet) likewise identifies the author with his characters, for this was an adjective applied by all who saw him to Stevenson himself.

As well as anticipating the transforming powers of Jekyll's potion, the division of the Deacon's character into "light" and "dark" sides that operate in daytime and night-time respectively, is also one that is taken up in 'Jekyll and Hyde'. Indeed, it could almost be Jekyll speaking when Brodie exclaims,

On with the new coat and into the new life! Down with the Deacon and up with the robber! [...] There's something in hypocrisy after all. If we were as good as we seem, what would the world be? [The city has its vizard on, and we – at night we are our naked selves. Trysts are keeping, bottles cracking, knives are stripping; and here is Deacon Brodie flaming forth the man of men he is!] (*DB*, p.21)

Important factors in relation to the main city-bound narratives (*The Misadventures of John Nicholson*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, and *Weir of Hermiston*) are also introduced in *Deacon Brodie* in the strained relationship between father and son. Although the play was published four years before the rift between the author and his own father, there is nevertheless a clear awareness of the danger of misconception. Just as Thomas' pride in his son made Stevenson's rejection of religious values even more of a blow, so Brodie's father also holds the Deacon in an almost reverential position, believing him to be the greatest among men. It is this constrictive judgement, one challenged by Brodie's secret crimes, that makes the shock of discovery a fatal one. Stevenson's fear of disappointing his father is thus possibly evident here, as is his association of such judgemental standards with the life of the capital. The importance of the father-figure in highlighting the double-life of the protagonist is therefore considerable, emphasising as it does the sense of hypocrisy inherent in imposed, and often false, judgements.

The close connection between the father-son relationship and the moralities of Edinburgh reappears in *The Misadventures of John Nicholson*, published eight years later, where it also impedes a narrative 'ascent'. Indeed, the accusatory tones of social hierarchy that open this tale with the statement, 'John Varey Nicholson was stupid', while '[h]is father – that iron gentleman – had long ago enthroned himself on the heights of the Disruption Principles' (SSE, p.142). The discord between the two characters is instantly established, and remains the driving force of the narrative, in this sense a clear predecessor of *Weir of Hermiston*. The representation of a motherless family, and of a strict and unyielding father who is a significant member of an important social institution, is common to both texts. The choice of a career in the church for Mr Nicholson is one that refers to Stevenson's own religious views, and draws out the

discrepancy between theory and practice. During the period of upheaval concerning religion in the Stevenson household, Louis was in fact urged to attend a class held by the minister of the local church – also a Mr Nicholson. Consequently, John's father is the 'citadel of the proprieties', while his study is 'the chamber of inquisition and the scene of punishment' (pp.150, 154). The distance between the fictional father and son is intensified by the latter's defective mental abilities (in *Weir of Hermiston* this becomes an unbridgeable difference of opinion), and the relationship between the two is accordingly presented in terms of an almost magnetic repulsion. Echoing Stevenson's own dreaded interviews with his father, John shrinks back from the thought of confronting the clergyman 'as the hand draws back from fire' (p.148).

John's mental infirmity, one which renders him naively innocent as well as forgetful and gullible, is the first medium through which a double in time rather than in space is introduced.⁹³ It is by this means that a form of division occurs, originating from John's failure to register the changes accompanying the passage of time. This rift between identity at any given time is marked when, on returning from America, he cannot recognise 'whether he was a John Nicholson of a bank in California street, or some former John, a clerk in his father's office' (p.183). Meeting his childhood sweetheart again, he sees only 'a large woman, strong, calm, a little masculine, her features marked with courage and good sense; [...] yet it is not Flora at all, thought John; Flora was slender and timid, and of changing colour, and dewy-eyed; and had Flora such an Edinburgh accent?' (p.184).⁹⁴ The fracturing of identity in this manner emphasises the

⁹³ Northrop Frye identifies this as a more difficult, and therefore less frequent, representation of the double (*The Secular Scripture*, p.117).

⁹⁴ This scene is a direct echo of a parallel sequence in Dickens' *Little Dorrit* describing the meeting of Flora Finching and Arthur Clennam, an episode modelled on Dickens' own experiences with Maria Beadnell.

relevance of objectivity and subjectivity, and truth and illusion, in their relationship to passing judgement in the tale.

The religious connotations established in reference to John's father, and his father's study, quickly develop into a confusion between father as patriarch and God the Father, as well as between the Reverend's house and his church. After being robbed of money entrusted to him, John's remorse and his father's study unite to become 'the whole of God's world for John Nicholson' (p.153). His father hastens to church, and John, left unpunished and unforgiven, leaves home, 'slip[ping] from the paternal doors' into a new-found sense of liberty in a prelude to 'ascent' (p.155). Pausing for the last time outside the church, the sound of the Sabbath hymns floats out to him,

a strange peri at the gates of a quaint paradise [...]. 'Who is this King of Glory?'
went the voices from within; and to John this was like the end of all Christian
observances, for he was now to be a wild man like Ishmael, and his life was to
be cast in homeless places and with godless people. (p.155)

This liberation is immediately placed within a context of both religion and patriarchy through John's perception of his father and God as one. An implicit comparison to Cain is relevant in this context, and is renewed on John's return to the city many years later from America, when, confused at the Christmas cheer, 'he fled like Cain; wandered in the night, unpiloted, careless of whither he went; fell and lay, and then rose again and wandered farther' (p.183). The analogy gains further momentum when John is accused of murder, and it is only now that a clear presentation of the double in space as opposed to time becomes evident, for it is John's brother, his antithesis in every way, who saves him from disgrace.

The parallel between house and church, father and God, is repeated on John's re-entry into the family home, whereupon, as a virtually human entity, the house's windows '[looked] down discreetly blinded, at the return of the prodigal' (p.150). Unlike his shamed sibling, Alexander Nicholson finds favour with his father, even invoking fear and awe in the older man, and bending the latter's will to his own. Although Alexander only appears at the very end of the narrative, the brothers' singular dissimilarity, and their hugely differing relationship to their father, surely suggest two sides of a single identity. In this sense, the social ease and general popularity of one only serves to highlight the opprobrium with which the other is viewed, and places these perspectives within a distinct context of social dictation and acceptability. An 'ascent' is thus denied by John's return to the family home, by implication also a re-attachment to a restrictive system.

The idea of two antithetical sides uniting to create a whole personality, while constituting the central idea behind 'Jekyll and Hyde', also appears in a short story, 'Markheim'. Here, Stevenson's preoccupation with the relationship between landscape and individual reemerges as a primary element of the story's make-up, for there is an undiminishing sense of claustrophobia, and of the restrictiveness of the city-scape. The degree to which the landscape is represented as an externalisation of the individual's inner life is illustrated when, having murdered a shop-keeper, the room and its contents appear to come to life to accuse Markheim. By some trick of the light, portraits and china figurines become animate, while the many clocks call out in their different voices to decry the murderer. Like nature's denunciation of the first murder, the laws of nature here also threaten to reverse themselves in order to betray Markheim: the walls may turn to glass at any moment, and the floors to quicksand, while the foundations of the house may collapse, or the one next door burst spontaneously into flames. This externalisation of conscience is personalised when, in the antique shop's many mirrors, Markheim 's[ees]

his face repeated and repeated, as it were an army of spies; his own eyes me[eting] and detect[ing] him'.⁹⁵

The representation of falling and collapse, and of pictures, statues, and mirrors, illustrates a 'descent' insofar as they represent 'the exchange of original identity for its shadow or reflection'.⁹⁶ This has been brought about by the indulgence of feeling in murdering the shop-keeper, and, as a Christmas story, it is even more appropriate that the 'life of the senses' is overtly condemned in the narrative, leading not to 'ascent', but to a fall. The fragmentation of Markheim's conscious and subconscious mind which this episode serves to highlight is a moral one, and defines his imprisonment within the social consciousness, as he is also captive within the house. This assumes a more accessible form when, in a probable influence from Poe's stories, he is sought by an unearthly visitant whose prediction of the immediate future proves to be accurate. This devilish being, having presented an overview of Markheim's past life and his decline into sin, is transformed into an angelic one, and determines the protagonist's course as one of capitulation under the patriarchal and religious systems.

'Jekyll and Hyde' is of course Stevenson's most outspoken text in this context, challenging as it did the deepest convictions of religious society. Although the narrative states that this tale is set in London, the description and atmosphere of the city described in it clearly point to Edinburgh as the setting. Accordingly, the hypocrisy of social behaviour is almost immediately apparent in the incomprehensible doubling of Enfield and Utterson, who, although they 'looked singularly dull' on their regular Sunday walks, nevertheless 'put the greatest store by these excursions, [and] counted them as the chief jewel of each week' (p.8). The context in which this famous story is set is one that

⁹⁵ 'Markheim', in *Robert Louis Stevenson: The Complete Short Stories*, The Centenary Edition, in two volumes, edited with an introduction by Ian Bell (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1993), vol.II, p.90.

revolves around social institution, and, while almost entirely avoiding any mention of females, respectable careers in reputable professions are ascribed to the male characters – lawyers, doctors and chemists. Even Enfield's ambiguous 'man about town' carries no ill-meaning implications (p.8).

It is at the complacent security of this structure that Stevenson strikes through the narrative, inverting the respectability of the medical profession by activating the theories of Darwin, and bringing the Highland beast into the Lowland capital. Using this as a central idea for the division of man's nature, Hyde is conceived in the laboratory previously belonging to a Dr Denman, 'the primal father'.⁹⁷ Hyde is accordingly presented in bestial terms as the primitive animal housed within Jekyll's body who breaks free to trample an innocent girl, and attack the amiable and fatherly Sir Danvers 'with ape-like fury' (p.26).⁹⁸ He also gets up to 'apelike tricks' with Jekyll's belongings, jumps 'like a monkey', and utters sounds 'of mere animal terror' when dying (pp.75, 47, 48). This analogy is even continued on a metaphorical level, showing the creature 'drinking pleasure with bestial avidity' (p.65). While suggesting the presence of our ancestry within each individual, Stevenson initially formulates this metaphor to imply liberty and oneness with man's primordial Self. It soon becomes, however, an antagonistic force, one that enacts its 'apelike spite' (p.76) against civilised man. Hyde's animalism, fulfilling the character's identification with and transformation into animal form, thus indicates Jekyll's 'descent' early on in the tale.

⁹⁶ Frye, p.155.

⁹⁷ Veeder, William and Gordon Hirsch [ed]., *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde After One Hundred Years* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p.121.

⁹⁸ Leonard Wolf [ed], in *The Essential Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde: The Definitive Annotated Edition of Robert Louis Stevenson's Classic Novel* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), points out that Sir Danvers' character is, however, suspicious. He is out late at night, approaches a stranger, and carries a purse full of money, with no identification save a stamped letter (p.63).

Illustrating this potential as belonging to everyman, Stevenson's essay 'The Manse' applies such notions to his grandfather, a cleric:

I know not which is the more strange, that I should carry about with me some fibres of my minister-grandfather; or that in him, as he sat in his cool study, grave, reverend, contented gentleman, there was an aboriginal frisking of the blood that was not his; tree-top memories, like undeveloped negatives, lay dormant in his mind; tree-top instincts awoke and were trod down; and Probably Arboreal (scarce to be distinguished from the monkey) gambolled and chattered in the brain of the old divine. (*SSE*, p.254)

Even society's most respectable members are denied exception from this perceived truth about human nature, and the author shakes the patriarch's self-complacency with his averment that the primitive cannot be rooted out of the civilised, but only denied, and that the two, however unequal, must necessarily exist side by side. Importantly, this passage also draws a direct relationship between Stevenson and his fictional creation through the acknowledgement of the same 'aboriginal' blood in his own veins. As he realised, 'I am not one of those who triumph over the carrion body, frail tabernacle, wicked carcase, or what you please' (*Letters*, vol.IV, March 1884, p.249). This fusion of personal, social and cultural casts a different perspective on 'Jekyll and Hyde', which can thus be read as referring in some degree to the author's own departure from given rules, as well as defining the complexities of his relationship with Thomas. Affirming this, he writes to his friend Will Low that Hyde would be 'quite willing to answer to the name of Low or Stevenson' (*Letters*, vol.V, Dec.1885, p.163).

The two natures of the protagonist are initially described in terms of separate beings, enabling the maintenance of respectability as well as the indulgence in baser pleasures.

Think of it – I did not even exist! Let me but escape into my laboratory door, give me but a second or two to mix and swallow the draught that I had always standing ready; and whatever he had done, Edward Hyde would pass away like the stain of breath upon a mirror; and there in his stead, quietly at home, trimming the midnight lamp in his study, a man who could afford to laugh at suspicion, would be Henry Jekyll. (JH, p.65)

The reference to the virgin brides trimming the lamps in Matthew 25 (cited as one of the 'Books Which Have Influenced Me'), serves to delineate the *nature* of the divide between the two personalities: while the doctor pretends to abide by the laws of God and society, his *alter ego* is allowed to break all rules, and lead an existence of utter amorality. This division also identifies Edinburgh itself as Stevenson knew it, and it is in accordance with this that – expanding the more direct uniting of house of the Father and house of the patriarch in 'The Misadventures of John Nicholson' – housing here defines the moral status of its (male) inhabitant. Accordingly, Dr Lanyon's house is in Cavendish Square, 'that citadel of medicine' (p.15), while Utterson's is situated 'conveniently near' a church whose tolling bells the meticulous lawyer uses as an aid to time-keeping (p.16), not least when he is sitting reluctantly reading 'a volume of some dry divinity' on a Sunday (p.14). By contrast, Jekyll's abode suggests the superficial lines along which the male characters of the story define their circle: it stands in 'a square of ancient, handsome houses, now for the most part decayed from their high estate, and let in flats and chambers to all sorts

and conditions of men' (p.19). Jekyll's house nevertheless appears well-to-do. This external reassurance is belied, however, by the impression received from that part of it fronting a by-street around the corner, a street whose character remains ambiguous, yet which is said to drive a trade on week-days. The sordid face of this section of the house is hence instantly perceived as an expression of Hyde's character.

The distinction between the "two" characters of Jekyll and Hyde is indirectly drawn by Lanyon and Utterson, and is primarily one between Reason and Imagination. Lanyon characterises that period of Jekyll's deviation from standard scientific experiments as a time when he 'became too fanciful for me' (p.15). Utterson conceptualises this idea more clearly, for, as 'a lover of the sane and customary sides of life, to whom the fanciful was immodest' (p.14), his attempt to grasp the nature of the relationship between the doctor and his repellent friend leads to a night-time, dream-like speculation on the subject: while '[h]itherto it had touched him on the intellectual side alone [...] now his imagination also was engaged, or rather enslaved [...] as he lay and tossed in the gross darkness of the night and the curtained room' (p.16). It is consequently only at this point that the lawyer is able to conceive of Hyde – who is after all a personification of the 'life of the senses' – in his true form. Thus, 'out of the shifting, insubstantial mists that had so long baffled [Utterson's] eye, there leapt up the sudden, definite presentiment of a fiend' (p.14). Maintaining the quality of imagination and dream, the sector of town inhabited by Hyde (and described as Soho) is furthermore perceived by the honourable Utterson as 'a district of some city in a nightmare', cloaked in impenetrable fog made up of 'a marvellous number of degrees and hues of twilight; for here it would be dark like the backend of evening; and there would be a glow of a rich, lurid brown, like the light of some strange conflagration' (p.27).

The patriarchal system's encouragement of a mind-set based upon convention, faith, and reason is made clear through this description of the Other by Utterson, whose adherence to the system is incomplete. The disturbing factor is therefore interpreted as fancy, an imagination that not only distorts reality, but is able to replace it. The (always subjective first person narrative) presentation of the Other as a creature of the night, of insanity, of the surreal, and even of the devil is in this sense entirely to be expected. It also fixes the perspective of the narrative as a judgemental one overwhelmed by the socio-moral concepts of the presiding order, however. This fact is enforced by the persistent imagery of the fire and ice of purgatory, as well as of passion and abstinence. The connection of the Other to the imagination, then, is significant, and is an aspect that will be central to the work of Collins and du Maurier, where it however functions as an agent of 'ascent', as will be shown.

The nightmarish imagery employed in 'Jekyll and Hyde' suggests an additional aspect of the dark double that only becomes clear in this particular text, and which is suggestive of a transcendence from the underworld of repression. The persistent references to Hyde's manifestation as a form of birth – he first appears when 'the morning, black as it was, was nearly ripe for the conception of the day' (p.63), and is thereafter constantly 'struggl[ing] to be born' (p.75) – are coupled with images of his physical containment within Jekyll's body. While he is said to be projected from the doctor, he is at first 'caged in his flesh', and it is only due to the draught that 'a solution of the bonds of obligation' is effected, leaving him 'unbridled' (pp.75, 62, 69). At this stage, 'like the slaves of Philippi, that which stood within ran forth', a metaphor of imprisonment that is continued with descriptions of Hyde *bounding* out of bed, '[breaking] out of all *bounds*' in committing murder, and, having committed suicide, lying with 'the *cords* of his face still mov[ing]' (pp.64, 26, 49, my italics). Developing the

parallel of house and body which was introduced with the initial description of Jekyll's abode, where the "two" houses, although appearing to be different, are in fact one, Hyde's predominance renders Jekyll a 'disconsolate prisoner' in his own house, one now 'really not *fit*' (p.39, my italics) for the entrance of visitors. The reversal of Jekyll's liberation through his *alter ego* into a state of self-imprisonment signals the narrative incapacity to break free and liberate the Self of its social constraints. This takes shape through repeated images of bondage, and presents first a metaphorical, and then a physical, restriction.

The analogy of house and body in the text is extended to include the city itself. To this end, the empty streets are referred to as arteries through which Hyde's passion flows. A more insistent juxtaposition, however, is that between Jekyll's side of town, and Hyde's. Consequently, Soho is wreathed in a thick brown fog, a region of dreams and nightmares, and the liberty exercised by Hyde in this sector is significant, for it suggests the importance of dreams and the life of the mind for the author. Stevenson's own nightmares, in fact, would often be characterised by something 'formless' invested with 'nothing more definite than a certain shade of *brown*, which he did not mind in the least while he was awake, but feared and loathed while he was dreaming' ('A Chapter on Dreams', *Essays*, p.430, my italics). These dreams, however, became a primary source of his creativity as a writer, encouraging him 'to lead a double life – one of the day, one of the night' (p.431). The importance of the author's dream-life and the creativity it enhanced in this sense oppose the restrictions of his frail body, a situation that is likened to the relationship between the social restriction imposed by the city (in the text, also body), and the creative freedom and imaginative life of the individual.

Having conceived the story for 'Jekyll and Hyde' following a vivid nightmare, Stevenson indirectly draws a further comparison between himself and the protagonist by

writing about his own 'Little People', or 'Brownies', whom he in similar fashion 'keep[s] locked in a back garret' (p.439). These entities, he claims, are responsible for his creative powers when asleep, for he is not talented enough when awake to manufacture such stories, and can therefore accept no credit for them.

[The Brownies] are near connections of the dreamer's, beyond doubt; they share in his financial worries and have an eye to the bank-book; they share plainly in his training; they have plainly learned like him to build the scheme of a considerate story and to arrange emotion in progressive order; only I think they have more talent; and one thing is beyond doubt, they can tell him a story piece by piece, like a serial, and keep him all the while in ignorance of where they aim. Who are they, then? and who is the dreamer? (p.438)

This subconscious creativity, one associated with a freeing of the imagination, relates to Hyde's liberty not only through the references to night and dreams, but also through Utterson's dream of the creature plucking back the doctor's bed-curtains as he lies sleeping. The potential of the imagination to liberate – through Hyde – the central identity, is therefore clear.

Disguise is also a potential means of Self-liberation within the text, where it symbolises the protagonist's desire to escape from his present situation; in this way, 'deception and theft and disguise are enlisted by [the escaping character] in a good cause.'⁹⁹ The distinction between Jekyll and his *alter ego*, inhabiting as they do different worlds, is accordingly highlighted by their hugely differing appearances – the 'large, well-made, smooth-faced man of fifty', and his 'ugly idol' (JH, pp.22, 63), a small man

⁹⁹ Frye, p.133.

with an air of malformation. Younger and darker than the doctor, Hyde appears to emanate an evil which disconcerts all about him. This sense of discomfort is brought into focus when he appears in Dr Lanyon's house, dressed in an ill-fitting costume.

[H]is clothes, that is to say, although they were of rich and sober fabric, were enormously too large for him in every measurement – the trousers hanging on his legs and rolled up to keep them from the ground, the waist of the coat below his haunches, and the collar sprawling wide upon his shoulders. Strange to relate, this ludicrous accoutrement was far from moving me to laughter. Rather, as there was something abnormal and misbegotten in the very essence of the creature that now faced me [...] this disparity seemed but to fit in with and to reinforce it. (p.56)

It is not deception through attire, however, but the removal of a 'fleshy vestment' (p.61) that ensures the success of Jekyll's disguise. The power of disguise in enabling liberty in the narrative is undercut, however, by the loss of control over external appearance; the nature and purpose of this device are thus reversed and instead become the reasons for Jekyll's self-imprisonment in his house.

More specifically, the attention which the narrative gives to the "two" characters' hands also emphasises their apparent physical dissociation from one another. While Jekyll's hand is 'professional in shape and size: it was large, firm, white and comely', Hyde's is 'lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusky pallor and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair' (p.67). This is made relevant to the threat under which the patriarchal hegemony has fallen when, remembering the time when he 'walked with [his] father's hand', Jekyll realises that he 'must [now] employ another hand', and proceeds to seek out

the elderly Lanyon (pp.70, 72). The motif turns more clearly to a religious context when Hyde desecrates a book of theology by scrawling – that is to say, exercising his "hand" – over it, and also burns Jekyll's letters, as well as destroying the portrait of his father. The dissociation of the "two" identities through this particular motif is expanded in the fiction of Collins and du Maurier, where writing becomes the central agent of 'ascent'. Even here, however, Hyde's handwriting indicates to Utterson that he is a murderer, and affirms the lawyer's opinion that he is mad (p.33). This establishes the power and potential of the motif in the text, although it is never developed fully by Stevenson.

In no other of Stevenson's works is a struggle that is based so finitely around the moral convictions and traditional standards of respectable religious Victorian society more clearly and consistently enacted. The conclusion of 'Jekyll and Hyde' is however one that cannot acknowledge a departure from such values. Jekyll finally indulges his sins *as himself*, while the very judgement of "sinning" grounds the narrative viewpoint within a religious framework. While embracing the ideas behind Darwinism, and attempting to deny the values of his upbringing, the ending not only of this, but of the majority of Stevenson's tales of the double, testifies to the author's inability to achieve such a detachment successfully. The integration of religious values into the text undercuts that which the author wishes to achieve through a depiction of the double; the high degree of subjectivity in the narrative supports the view that Stevenson is unable to conceptualise the narrative events – although he has created them – in any other way. The ultimate return to values dictated by propriety means that, as the dark double who holds the key to 'ascent' is effaced or diminished, the narrative itself, having diverged from the path of propriety, returns to the judgementalism of that system. Illustrating this, Long John Silver, although escaping the law, is ultimately admonished by the narrative; Alan Breck fades away from the narrative focus; both James and his now likewise

corrupt brother share a dramatic death; Gordon Darnaway is quite literally destroyed by his own superstition; Markheim faces death by capital punishment; and Jekyll, unable to dissociate himself from his Other, must share Hyde's fate.

Stevenson's departure from Scotland in 1887, the year after the publication of 'Jekyll and Hyde', had a great impact on his writing, not least when, in January 1890, he decided to settle in Samoa. While his feelings towards Scotland were in some ways sharpened through absence, they remained contradictory, for he realised that, while missing its unique charm, he also rejoiced in the escape from 'one of the vilest climates under heaven' ('Edinburgh', *Lantern-Bearers*, p.88). The so-called South Seas tales, those works set in that region, are, as might be expected, quite different from anything that Stevenson had written before. As concerns the present study, however, it is necessary to point out that, in spite of this, there remains a preoccupation with the opposition of religion and the Self, albeit in an entirely new format. The setting of the South Seas tales is in this respect of the utmost importance, for it functions as an archetype, because it represents not only a region exempt from the ravages of nature, but also a psychological region apparently exempt from the mores of civilization'; as such, it remains 'outside the realms of Judeo-Christian moral law'.¹⁰⁰ The displacement of the narrative setting from one operating around the historical religious standards of Scotland to one removed from morality in the religious sense is momentous. Nevertheless, the encroaching presence of the settler destroys this equilibrium, bringing both physical corruption in the form of disease, and moral corruption in the disruption of the native culture. Missionaries and traders are presented as being equally influential in this respect, and an opposition and tension between the two states is once again created.

¹⁰⁰ Hillier, Robert Irwin, *The South Seas Fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), p.2.

Stevenson's close involvement in island affairs and life, although shaping his choice of narrative setting and presentation, does not appear to have ultimately altered the issues that emerge as central concerns in the narratives. The central works in this respect – *The Wrecker*, *The Ebb-Tide*, and *The Beach of Falesà* – fall somewhere between Stevenson's early adventure story format, and those works that place greater focus on the psychological existence of the characters. The first of these includes the double in the figures of Loudon Dodd and Norris Carthew, who are divided only by the role that circumstance has played in their lives. *The Ebb-Tide* presents a different vision of island life, where the settler has assumed the role of god, and becomes a monstrous disseminator of fanatical religious standards. This negative invader-figure threatens to be reinvented in *The Beach of Falesà* with the arrival of a new trader, Wiltshire, onto the island of Falesà. It soon becomes clear, however, that the outcome must either be integration into the ways of island life, or destruction, as the fate of the other traders has shown. The element of the supernatural which forms a central part of the short stories 'The Isle of Voices' and 'The Bottle Imp' is also vital in this text, where it can almost be read as replacing Scottish superstition. The corruption of native beliefs is made clear in the conviction that living devils roam the island, and Wiltshire's scorn soon gives way to a belief in the existence of a 'devil-woman'.¹⁰¹ The process of growth that takes place in other texts through a physical and/or metaphorical journey is thus resolved in this instance by Wiltshire's gradual integration into the native life and culture of the island. The antitheses of civilised and primitive, native and invader, and religion and nature are nevertheless implicit, for a reversion to original, pre-trader island life is impossible.

¹⁰¹ *The Beach of Falesà*, in *South Sea Tales*, edited with an introduction by Roslyn Jolly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.63.

Returning to a Scottish setting for *Catriona*, a sequel to *Kidnapped*, in 1892, it appears that Stevenson's thoughts were increasingly turned towards home. Completing the novel in September of that year, he already had the plot of *Weir of Hermiston* outlined by the start of the following month, and eagerly anticipated that it would be his best book yet. In addition, a draft for another project, *Heathercat*, a tale dealing with the covenanting stories familiar from childhood, was also prepared. It is clear that his last novel, *Weir of Hermiston*, although never completed, once again takes up the themes so closely connected with Scotland and Edinburgh, and presents them in a more sophisticated manner than before. Coinciding with the start of writing, the author's nostalgia for Scotland appears to have been in the forefront of his mind, despite his involvement in Samoan life and politics: '[i]t is a singular thing that I should live here in the South Seas under conditions so new and so striking, and yet my imagination so continually inhabit that cold old huddle of gray hills from which we come', he wrote to J. M. Barrie in November 1892 (*Letters*, vol.VII, Nov.1892, p.412). His feelings towards Scotland were even now often expressed in terms of conflicting desires, primarily the pull it exerted on him, fuelling a desire to return there, and the opposing need to exorcise it from himself, to root 'the blessed, beastly place' (*Letters*, vol.VIII, Sep.1893, p.159) out of his affections. While life in the South Seas was pleasurable enough, Jenni Calder points out that in Samoa, 'Stevenson could separate himself from what he saw in a way that he could not in the case of Scotland, and Edinburgh in particular'.¹⁰² The deep internalisation of his Scottish heritage could thus never be reversed or denied, invoking a lifelong internal conflict that is obvious in a literary dimension through the manner in which the narrative remains grounded in an underworld of restrictive social order.

¹⁰² Calder [ed], 1981, p.8.

The fact that *Weir of Hermiston* should be based on a depiction of Robert MacQueen, Lord Braxfield, a figure who fascinated Stevenson by combining those elements of Edinburgh that he himself struggled with, reaffirms an interest in the personal and psychological life of his characters. A portrait of the allegedly 'coarse and illiterate eighteenth-century judge' seemed to be an ideal choice in this respect.¹⁰³ Although exhibiting a more integrated style – a development also seen in the inclusion of two central female characters, the two Kirstys – the development of Stevenson's intentions in this novel remains incomplete. It is certain, nevertheless, that this final work, like the others set in Scotland, centralises the themes of the double, religion, Darwinism, and the complex relationship between father and son, as well as the discrepancy between the respectable and debased facets of a single character. The more subtle manner in which several of these themes are represented is evident in the development of the central relationship between the Weir and his son as doubles, and in the young Kirsty's struggle between nature and propriety ('you might say the joints of her body thought and remembered, and were gladdened, but her essential self, in the immediate theatre of consciousness, talked feverishly of something else, like a nervous person at a fire.')¹⁰⁴

It is the evolvment of the character of the judge himself that is however the central example of conflict and self-division. A respectable if merciless judge, his son Archie witnesses a heretofore unknown part of his father's character in drunkenness, when he is presented with 'the plebeian in a larger print; the low, gross accent, the low, foul mirth, grew broader and commoner; he became less formidable, and infinitely more

¹⁰³ Pope Hennessy, James, *Robert Louis Stevenson*, with an introduction by Nigel Nicolson (London: Cassell, 1974), p.261.

¹⁰⁴ *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Weir of Hermiston*, p.157. All quotations from *Weir of Hermiston* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

disgusting' (*WH*, p.98). It is through his son that a sense of the impossibility of reconciliation between these opposing qualities is imparted, for Archie is unable to relate the ruthless judge with the rational student and man in his father. The result, then, is an image of 'a man who was all iron without and all sensibility within' (p.110). The accuracy of this judgement and the fuller development of events, however, remain unsettled. Archie's incapacity to deny that he is in some manner a 'chip of the old block' (p.100), a title with which his fellow students tease him, becomes not only a more personal expression by the author of his own attachment to Thomas, but also the more accessible and sympathetic instance of inner struggle in the text.

The intended finale of the novel – in which, having been condemned to execution by his father, Archie is rescued and flees with Kirsty to America, leaving his father to die from the shock of the ordeal – cannot be analysed, since it was never written. In virtually all of the fiction that has been explored in this chapter, however, there is finite evidence of the subjugation and capitulation of the transgressive force. These endings signify not only the defeat of that which has dissented, but place this within a strictly socio-moral context. Where social law itself does not directly avenge itself on this subversive force, then the protagonist must either re-enter the house of the father, or be consumed from within by that very force of dissent, be it of superstitious or scientific origin. The inability to escape from the values symbolised by the father-figure is ultimately in all probability the expression of Stevenson's own incapacity to break free of Scotland, Edinburgh, and the values it had instilled in him through his father.

The literature of the double is justifiably considered to be largely confined to a focus on the masculine, as Astrid Schmid illustrates in her psychoanalytical study of

male doubles.¹⁰⁵ There can be no doubt that Stevenson adheres to this rule, with the nature of his concerns – surrounding as they do the standards of patriarchal society – making this additionally relevant. Stevenson's reliance on the Gothic form, however, means that the manner in which his doubles are presented is dependent on a genre in which the female and the feminine were indispensable. Creating the double through emphases on fantasy, subjectivity, emotion, lack of inhibition, and the psychological life consequently connects the Otherness described by Stevenson with the "feminine" realm of 'emotional and imaginative awareness' that is formed through these very same media in Gothic fiction.¹⁰⁶ Other writers drawing on the Gothic genre often portray the double as female. Poe's female animas – Berenice, Ligeia, Morella, Madeline Usher, Eleonora, and the lady of 'The Oval Portrait' – and Wilkie Collins' female/feminised doubles are clear instances of this. The female double's position as Other is further enforced by the frequently male perspective of the narrative. A recognition of this "feminine" element, whether conscious or subconscious, is likewise affirmed in Stevenson's presentation of doubles. David Balfour's youthful naiveté, for instance, contrasts strongly with Allan Breck's physical dominance and resilience, and their relationship to each other is even likened to that of man and wife. Similar qualities are attributed to Henry and James Durie, while other characters unite both elements: John Nicholson is thus '[i]nwardly, in spite of his gross body and highly masculine whiskers, [...] more like a maiden than a man of twenty-nine' (*SSE*, p.157). The characterization of this inner Otherness as feminine in nature is upheld by descriptions of Edward Hyde as hysterical, '[w]eeping like a woman or a lost soul' (*JH*, p.48).

¹⁰⁵ Schmid, Astrid, *The Fear of the Other: Approaches to English Stories of the Double (1764-1910)* (Berne: Peter Lang, 1996).

¹⁰⁶ Howells, Coral Ann, *Love, Mystery, and Misery: Feeling in Gothic Fiction* (London: The Athlone Press, 1978), p.3.

While Stevenson draws on the "femaleness" of the Gothic, his is nevertheless a literature that relates more closely to a male system of events. In view of the female doubles of Wilkie Collins and Daphne du Maurier which this study will go on to examine, however, it is important to acknowledge such a presence in Stevenson's fiction. It is this very presence, indeed, as the present study will demonstrate, that is developed by Collins and du Maurier to form what shall be referred to as a secondary narrative level – a system of events which parallels the traditional romance narrative structure, yet has a different conclusion.

It is clear that Stevenson's central concern, the father-son relationship, is developed and presented through tensions between the restriction and liberty of the Self, as presented through the double. The hierarchical and social position of the father is thus extended and expanded into an exploration of religion versus nature, and of patriarchy as direct opposer to liberty. In relation to this, environment has been shown to play a significant role in characterising and influencing the individual, as is evident in the relevance of Scotland in a personal as well as in a political and narrative dimension. By focusing on this, Stevenson is able to draw on familiar surroundings for the journey which symbolises the attempted shift from restriction to liberty in 'the life of the senses'. The movement between Highland and Lowland is consequently of vital importance in the Scottish novels, and is duly reflected in the characters of the central identities themselves. Likewise, the narrative shift to the capital city is also momentous, for it emphasises the return to the restrictions of "civilised" life, an idea that Stevenson underlines by setting it in opposition to the primitivist and heretical theories of Darwinism.

This tension manifests itself through several distinct areas or themes, ones that are repeated throughout Stevenson's work, and that conform, albeit less clearly than in

the fiction of Collins or du Maurier, to Frye's theory of 'descent' and 'ascent'. The use of landscape, as mentioned above, and the relation of the central identity to an animal or animals, are clear codes for 'descent'. A reversal, however, is denied in these narratives, despite the presence of disguise as a theme. Even writing, although briefly, plays a part in suggesting 'ascent', as has been shown, yet does not fulfil this possibility. These themes, because they are so often interconnected, and are not as elaborate as in the fiction of the other two writers in the present study, have not been treated separately. This lack of distinction between various themes is a noteworthy point, nevertheless, for it contributes to Stevenson's amalgamation of narrative 'descent' and 'ascent'. As becomes increasingly clear through plot in his later fiction, the narrative remains grounded in a dark underworld. This is formulated around ideas related, as this chapter has argued, to Edinburgh society, and more specifically to religion and the father. The strong relationship between the author's personal life and his literary output has been supported by frequent parallels between himself and his darker characters – for instance through their desire to travel, their 'leanness', and his open identification with James Durie and Edward Hyde – thus rendering a personal perspective of narrative events as a whole more than usually relevant. Consequently, it becomes clear that the author's own inability to dissociate himself wholly from those values imposed upon the narrative underworld is responsible for the absence of 'ascent'.

The motifs through which Stevenson expresses this *potential* shift, however, are ones employed to differing degrees by Wilkie Collins and Daphne du Maurier for the same purpose, as will be shown by focusing on the function of these themes in their work. Falling chronologically between the two, it is clear that an analysis of Stevenson's work, relying as it does so strongly on the device of the double, is both necessary and useful in this respect. Whereas Collins employs the motif of the double largely as a social

critique, and du Maurier in a purely personal dimension, Stevenson can be said to unite these two elements, embracing both the socio-political and the personal in his exposé of the double, and showing them to be ultimately interdependent. As such, his writing encompasses both of these areas, creating a more general outline of the use of the double-motif than either of the following two authors, who develop only one of these factors in a manner specific to each.

It has become clear, through an assessment of Stevenson's work in relation to the themes of 'descent' and 'ascent', that, while the double represents social and personal schisms, it also presents the potential to alleviate them by embracing the 'life of the senses' and discarding the Self restricted by patriarchal socio-moral standards. The application of a system of romance narrative progression illustrates, however, that the texts remain fixed in a state of 'descent', for the narrative consciousness is inextricably rooted in traditional ideas. This "failure" will be contrasted to the fiction of Wilkie Collins and Daphne du Maurier, in which the presence of an alternative narrative level will be located, and its function assessed in similar terms.

Chapter 3: Wilkie Collins

3.1 Introduction

The fiction of Wilkie Collins, operating within the genre of sensation literature, has played a vital role in the development of the motif of the double, marking, as the present study will demonstrate, a significant stage in its function. Despite the contrast in style with Stevenson's work, a consideration of the literature of both authors from the same perspective underlines such a development, and clarifies the factors relevant to this change. This progression will be examined further in relation to the work of Daphne du Maurier, whose treatment of the theme allies her to Collins. The narrative progression defined by Northrop Frye in *The Secular Scripture*¹⁰⁷ is more overtly apparent in the novels of Collins than in the fiction of Stevenson, and is presented – and subverted – in a manner that highlights this author's particular concerns. The motif of the double, as before, plays a vital part in this construction, as its predominance in Collins' literature suggests. A consideration of the author's work from a perspective of romance narrative structure will prove integral to the identification of *two* narrative levels. By assessing the themes involved in this structure, as defined by Frye, the function and objective of each level will become clear. Firstly, this chapter will outline some general features of sensation fiction relevant to a consideration of this aspect of Collins' work. By acknowledging the concerns of the genre, and by extension the more specific concerns of this author, an application of Frye's theory will serve to illuminate Collins' presentation of certain issues in the narrative.

¹⁰⁷ *A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), chapters four and five.

The influence of the Gothic genre is clear not only in the writing of Wilkie Collins, but in sensation fiction as a whole, for this draws heavily on the subjectivity of Gothic literature, as well as its intricate plots and willingness to shock. The literary development of the motif of the double hence entered an interesting and important phase during the 1850's and 1860's, when it was frequently employed as a device of the sensation novel. The exaggerated theatricality, convoluted plot-lines and heightened coincidence that characterized this fiction meant that the double was generally used in its most obvious and unrefined form. It is little surprise, then, that it was at the time largely dismissed as an aspect introduced to hamper already unbelievable narratives, grounding them even more firmly in the absurd. The sheer magnitude of the sensation fiction market meant, nevertheless, that its literary trademarks quickly became familiar and, although disguise and doubling had long been used in this strictly one-dimensional manner, the derision aimed at sensation fiction automatically encompassed the motif of the double, now accepted as a staple of the genre. For these reasons, the present study would maintain that this period constitutes an important landmark in the development of the motif of the double, and had a huge impact on its subsequent literary identity. Although a significant number of studies have been carried out on sensation fiction, relatively little note has been made of the more sophisticated manner in which Wilkie Collins has treated this particular subject. In his fiction, the double is closely involved with a number of themes centring around an issue that is, in itself, a surprising one for a Victorian male to tackle – that of the female identity.

It is important to demonstrate that Collins' approach grew out of a recognition that the contemporary social environment was based upon values that were inherently

false, infringing upon and destroying the individual's rights and identity.¹⁰⁸ The sensation genre as a whole took issue with such perceived hypocrisies, formulating its contents to challenge belief and undermine the established rules of social etiquette. Although the purpose of this was indeed to surprise as well as to raise awareness, the manner in which the public responded was telling. The shock directed at this fiction confirmed its attack on the existing order, and was moreover primarily centred around a moral judgement based largely on the transgressive nature and activities of the female characters – murderers, prostitutes, bigamists and the like. This transgression was also ascribed to the authors, mostly women (Mary Elizabeth Braddon and Mrs. Henry Wood being the best-known), who dared to write of what was declared to be depravity. Contemporary fears and anxieties concerning gender as well as class boundaries were exploited by them, and the books were consequently condemned as 'works that dangerously arouse the sexuality of women – particularly [...] middle-class women [...] – the same charge that used to be leveled at writers of earlier Gothic literature'.¹⁰⁹ The fact that the sensation genre was predominantly a female one facilitated, as Heller also remarks, the direction of this condemnatory outlet of male fears, in what was a precursor of the greater social anxiety and change that took place during the last decades of the nineteenth century. That, within this social context, a concern with the role of women should form a central part of Collins' work is therefore not incongruous, although his treatment of the subject is in many ways well ahead of his time, as will be demonstrated.

Wilkie Collins both was and was not a product of these times, for, while recognizing the social hypocrisies and inadequacies of the period, he exploits them by

¹⁰⁸ It is also important to note, however, that such a view was probably exploited by writers in creating this type of fiction. The reader can nevertheless only accept the anxieties presented in the text, as well as in many of the author's articles, as genuine.

¹⁰⁹ Heller, Tamar, *Dead Secrets: Wilkie Collins and the Female Gothic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p.90.

applying the very structure of polarities which was fixed in the Victorian consciousness, as was manifest, for instance, in images of woman as either angel or whore. Although it could be argued that this exploitation was purely for fictional purposes, the author's personal life supports the view that these concerns were genuine. The theme of the double is consequently an overwhelming presence in his work, where it functions as far more than a purely effective motif of the sensation genre. Affirming his involvement in contemporary ideologies, Collins was also greatly influenced by controversial figures and movements. Although familiar with the art-world through his father's profession and circle of friends, which included Constable and Fuseli, Collins was clearly more affected by his contemporaries, sharing many of their ideas. The paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, for instance, with whom he had close ties, present a clear parallel between women and pet animals, as Elaine Shefer shows in her study of the subject, *Birds, Cages and Women in Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite Art*.¹¹⁰ This is an analogy that Collins also uses in his work, as will become apparent. Dickens, who was also a close friend and associate, completes the circle of acquaintance who used their work as a means of voicing their social concerns. Like Collins, he too employed the double in his fiction, for example in *Dombey and Son* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. His treatment of the theme is very different, however, and although it is only reasonable to assume that the two writers must have influenced one another, this does not appear to have been significant, and certainly did not affect the individuality of either author.

Despite the exaggerated style and subject-matter of the sensation novel, it was, perhaps surprisingly, important to Collins that the ideas he developed fictionally should be based, where possible, on factual events, and even on real people. It is clear, for example, that even the author's own experiences were incorporated into his novels and

¹¹⁰ (New York: Peter Lang, 1990).

short stories; his friend Edward Ward's secret marriage to a young girl, for instance, in which Collins played a significant part, is directly echoed in the plots of *Miss or Mrs.?*, *Armada*, *Basil*, and 'The Biter Bit'.¹¹¹ Indeed Collins, arousing Dickens' disapproval, insisted on prefacing his novels with statements affirming their basis in truth. This supports not only the fact that his novels functioned as social critiques, but that their author desired his readers to be aware of this. There can therefore be little doubt that the female doubles so often found in his work originate at least in part from his own double life with Martha Rudd and Caroline Graves, the latter – a woman of ambiguous background leading a respectable existence as his supposed wife – herself virtually a character out of one of his own novels, as Catherine Peters remarks. Collins' concern with accurate representation (he gave meticulous attention to the facts and figures he drew upon, frequently consulting professionals in the field for clarification) directs the focal interest to an area where, especially in Victorian ideology, the representation of truth was riddled with ambiguities: it is *identity*, therefore, that lies at the heart of the vast majority of Collins' work. The discrepancy between perception and reality in this respect is given shape through the inclusion of the double, of Self and Other. The enforced dissociation of the Self from its own identity is made clear through this device. This in turn gives rise to an attempt at breaking through the façade of social strictures in pursuit of the truth.

It has been clearly established through this précis that Collins' concerns were determined not only by those of the sensation genre as a whole, but also by personal experience; his anxieties regarding the effect of social strictures on women consequently constitute a central part of his literature. In contrast to the misogynistic outlook which

¹¹¹ Peters, Catherine, *The King of Inventors: A Life of Wilkie Collins* (London: Seeker & Warburg, 1991), p.80.

recent analyses have imposed on an author like R. L. Stevenson – 'Mr. Stevenson does not need, we may say, a petticoat to inflame him'¹¹² – Collins has long been lauded as a feminist writer. If, furthermore, as Marcia Landy believes, feminist criticism can be described as being one of many

critiques which have at their core the inclusion of views of oppressed groups, that probe the mythology about women and other minority groups perpetuated in the stereotypes and attitudes which are a mirror of prevailing fantasies and conscious social norms,

then Collins may surely be included under the term.¹¹³ Despite risking a reputation of effeminacy by entering a field dominated by women writers as well as readers, Collins, like other writers of this fiction, also persisted in structuring his novels around central female characters. The themes of 'descent' and 'ascent' are also highly relevant in this respect. It has been argued, for example, that the male/female double generally requires ' "apatriarchal space" [...] outside the social environment' in order to function properly; *Wuthering Heights* presents a clear image of such a space.¹¹⁴ Blum explores the ultimate reach of such a relationship between gender and setting in a consideration of Ursula Le Guin's science fiction, where a genderless world is depicted. The setting of the Victorian domestic novel, on the other hand, means that the primary focus must inevitably fall on women, and Collins manipulates this fact in his delineation of borders – physical boundaries that are reflected in the social restrictions on female identity. This reaches

¹¹² Quoted by Pykett, Lynn, in *Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), p.66, from *Partial Portraits*, Henry James, Macmillan, 1888, p.141.

¹¹³ In *The Authority of Experience: Essays in Feminist Criticism*, edited by A. Diamond and Lee R. Edwards (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1977), pp.16-17.

¹¹⁴ Blum, Joanne, *Transcending Gender: The Male/Female Double in Women's Fiction*, UMI Research

extreme proportions in the many instances of incarceration of female characters, sometimes even as attempts to deny their very existence.

Like his friends, the Pre-Raphaelites, Collins develops certain themes in a metaphorical manner to aid his social critique. Landscape, for example, is one of these. The author's attention to details of landscape is seen clearly in the travel-writing he undertook, and it, together with the theme of animals, is used in the novels as a means of highlighting tensions surrounding ideas of expression, identity and liberty, as this chapter will go on to illustrate. The consistent tensions between male and female, fair and dark, sensuality and innocence, freedom and restriction, all concepts which held an important place in contemporary thought, were doubtless influenced by the ideology of imperialism. With its emphasis on the encroachment of the Foreign into the civilised domain, and its corresponding anxiety with space, control and idealism, this becomes closely allied to the issues which Collins wishes to explore in relation to the female. Foreign influences – Italian in particular – on Collins and his contemporaries were numerous. A childhood trip to Italy undertaken between 1836 and 1838 was, by his own account, highly influential on his ideas, for Italy embodied values and views almost entirely opposed to his father's rigid ones, as Catherine Peters has pointed out. He was drawn to Italy again in 1853 on a trip with Dickens and Augustus Egg, when the charm of the country was heightened through its associations with childhood memories. This fascination with Italy appears most notably in *The Woman in White*, in the characters of Pesca and Fosco, as well as in its numerous references to music, art and politics. While, as has been stated, the Foreign plays an important part in constructing the idea of the incarcerated female, Collins undertakes to present a subverted version of traditional depictions of the Foreign as a negative and alien force. Instead of maintaining separate

spheres, the author questions the relevance of these set boundaries as the two worlds meet in what is also a meeting of "masculine" patriarchal values with "feminine" as alien, and an actualization of the tensions between Self and Other. This will be of great importance in formulating two parallel narrative levels, ones that will rely heavily on the motif of the double.

The drawing together of two identities takes a more direct form as a de-stabilizing of gender boundaries. Stemming from contemporary fears of female liberation and subsequent male identity crisis, same-sex doubles often give way in the novels to struggles of identity within marriage, and between genders. The most interesting manner in which this is developed by the author, however, is in the ambiguous gender of many main characters, a feature which is most apparent in his work of the 1850's and 60's. Referring to *The Woman in White*, Philip O'Neill suggests that 'the categories of masculine and feminine are insufficient to measure the entire spectrum of sexuality and gender', in a comment which is equally applicable to a wider selection of Collins' texts.¹¹⁵ Since gender is a feature suggesting ultimate polarity, the fact that Collins so often unites gender characteristics in one character signifies not only social and internal conflict, but also suggests the futility of categorisation, as well as the hypocrisy of limited gender roles. It is this challenging of set ideals that lies at the centre of the present study's assessment of Collins' work, for division, restriction and gender identity are all closely implicated in the representation of the double. The particularity and accuracy that are so characteristic of these novels conflict with and consequently highlight the fluidity and impermanence of various boundaries, as will be demonstrated. Furthermore, the patriarchal concern with accurate representation and knowledge is contradicted by the central female identity, whose carefully defined social position is challenged and

overcome during the course of the narrative, in what amounts to a reinvention of the truth. This is accomplished by the creation of a secondary narrative level that refers specifically to her, as will be seen.

The literary tradition of incarcerated women is a long one bearing special links not only with the Gothic but with the Romantics too, in whose work it was often portrayed. Jennifer Gribble's study of the incarcerated woman in Victorian literature, with special reference to 'The Lady of Shalott', highlights the predominance of the image of an 'enclosed lady [...] locked in contemplation' who voices a concern with 'the nature and function of creativity'. Gribble points out the interest which Tennyson's theme held for the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, with Hunt and Rossetti illustrating the poem for the Moxon edition in 1857.¹¹⁵ Wilkie Collins may therefore have been influenced by their use of this theme. He was himself, nevertheless, only too aware of society's restrictions on the Self, and gained the reputation of eccentricity in his denial of many of its rules, in his life as well as in his writing. Writing was one means through which such views could be expressed in a developed and sustained manner, and it is therefore appropriate that the activity of writing should itself play such an important part in his fiction. As this chapter will argue, writing, although not recognised as such by Frye, becomes a clear signifier of 'ascent' in Collins' fiction, where it is a means of liberating the imagination and integrating the Self on a secondary narrative level. It is only in this way, indeed, that such a liberation – one that is contrary to contemporary social values – can be portrayed.

'They did everything they knew how to do in order to throw the colour of masculinity into their writing', said Mrs. Gaskell of the Brontës.¹¹⁷ The relationship

¹¹⁵ Wilkie Collins: *Women, Property and Propriety* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1988), p.119.

¹¹⁶ *The Lady of Shalott in the Victorian Novel* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1983), pp.3, 2-3.

¹¹⁷ Quoted by Lynn Sukenick in *The Authority of Experience: Essays in Feminist Criticism*, p.31, from Lawrence, M., *The School of Femininity* (New York, 1936), p.63.

between gender identity and creative writing has long been an issue of contention among critics, who have explored the question of "masculine" and "feminine" writing at length. What is clear is that the historical difficulty of women attempting to write in their own identities has united ideas of women's writing with women's social liberation. As Lyn Pykett rightly points out, 'most of the major sensation heroines are not particularly outspoken – indeed they are significantly silent and unable to articulate their feelings and desires at crucial points in the narrative'.¹¹⁸ Collins outlines the restricted position of his female characters through parallels with domestic animals, comparisons with the Foreign, and by placing them in imprisoning landscapes. There are clear indications, nevertheless, of the possibility of liberty from this condition – one that is achieved in the text through the act of writing. By placing a pen in the hands of his female characters, Collins subverts the literary rules, allowing the character direct expression. The freedom to write is thus an important development both in the role of the double and in the theory of romance narrative structure in constituting a clear 'ascent', and is furthermore a particular characteristic of Collins' female doubles. Continuing the theme of the imaginary life, Collins' experience in the theatre lends itself to a focus on the idea of deceptive appearance, and its obstruction of true identity. This is not only present in its obvious form as masquerade and disguise, but is outlined in a subtle manner as forming part of society's control over the individual through appearance. This in turn is presented as a potential means of enabling freedom, here one of self-expression. Its failure in this respect, however, underlines the material values of Victorian society, and undercuts the success of writing as a mentally liberating activity by re-grounding the text in the material world. This study will show that narrative 'ascent' is never a permanent one in

¹¹⁸ *The 'Improper' Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.49.

Collins' fiction, and that this relates directly to his perception of female identity in the Victorian world.

The ideas of transgression through writing and through disguise that are seen in a rudimentary form in Stevenson's 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' are here present as part of a more sophisticated treatise on the nature of identity and the possibility of the freedom of the Self. The various instances of doubling collaborate to create a parody of the Victorian world of hypocrisy and illusion, through which the central female identity must struggle to express and indeed *be* herself. The male system which rules the world of the novels and delineates their boundaries is consequently one that is undermined and threatened by secrets, non-conformity, and lack of an objective comprehension of the truth. Because the theme of the double is so extensively employed by Collins, who was in addition extremely prolific as a writer, the present study will focus predominantly on his work of the 1850's and 60's, during which decades he produced what are generally acknowledged to be his best novels. This is a decision also justified by the fact that there does not appear to be a significant *development* of the themes that this study wishes to explore in relation to narrative structure. Rather, they are more generally dominant in the work of this period, and a chronological study would therefore be non-productive. Instead, taking *The Woman in White* as the central text, this chapter will assess the ways in which Collins structures his critique of social claims and values through the device of the double, within the context of the structure of narrative progression as discussed in the introduction to the present study.

3.2 Themes of 'Descent'

i. Landscapes

A consideration of the themes of 'descent' will reveal the characteristics which Wilkie Collins ascribes to the narrative underworld. Furthermore, a definitive divide will be seen to take place between what the present study has termed the primary and the secondary narrative levels. These refer largely to a "masculine" and "feminine" consciousness respectively; the narrative underworld will thus be seen to be different for each. While landscape did not hold the profound and personal importance for Collins that it later did for du Maurier, it nevertheless plays a significant role in his novels. Although Daphne du Maurier manipulated it to a far greater extent as a means of focusing on the characters' inner lives, Collins' landscapes are vital in explicating and enforcing the characters' *social* situations, and extending the author's critique. In doing this, the text will operate along traditional lines, also expressing, albeit less overtly, more controversial ideas that relate to the female identity. The description of two sequences of 'descent' and 'ascent' will therefore express concerns that would otherwise be difficult for a writer of the Victorian period to voice.

Like many of his contemporaries, including the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Collins centres around a metaphorical representation of landscape in his texts, giving them, like du Maurier, an aura of the unreal and the imaginary, as will be seen. At their most fundamental level, Collins' landscapes repeat the restrictive themes – and in the case of *The Woman in White*, the restrictive framework – of the text to further enact the imprisonment of the female characters. The novels showing this most clearly are *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, both of which are located in isolated country estates where, paradoxically, the central female characters are figuratively (and in the case of Rosanna Spearman, actually) suffocated. In this respect, there is a clear echo of a

mode belonging to traditional Gothic literature; Emily St. Aubert's first approach to the castle of Udolpho in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is accompanied, for instance, by the sensation that 'she was going into her prison'.¹¹⁹ By being so closely connected to the female consciousness, as this study will argue, landscape becomes a central theme of 'descent', imparting a sense of a discontinuity in consciousness, as well as suggesting restriction. The double, as will become apparent, is closely involved in the interpretation of this shift.

The constricting framework of *The Woman in White*, universally recognised as an important feature of the novel, is foregrounded by the assertion of Walter Hartright's newly-found patriarchal right to alter names and exclude the irrelevant, as the text's "editor". The novel is even organised in the form of a legal trial, with eye-witnesses attesting to the truth of events. Yet, even within this, the construction of the narrative world bears witness to the importance of landscape to Collins' novel, for the author elicits the reader's constant awareness of the textual landscape. As well as functioning as a tool for social commentary, questioning and criticizing the values of the established order, landscape plays a vital role in defining the characters who inhabit it, whilst also echoing the social and personal conflicts that take place.

The Woman in White's action is located primarily in two country estates, Limmeridge House and Blackwater Park, themselves part of Collins' larger plan of fair and dark, black and white, enclosed and open, and shifts only in the final stage of the narrative to London. The two women around whom the story centres are incarcerated first within one estate and then within the other; interestingly, even when they are relatively independent and living in London, they must remain in a state of seclusion as

¹¹⁹ Radcliffe, Ann, edited with an introduction by Bonamy Dorée, with explanatory notes by Frederick Garber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p.227.

well as anonymity. It is worth examining the first impressions that Collins gives us of the two residences, for these remain intact as the defining characteristics of the two locations. Walter's initial journey from the railway station to the mansion is undertaken in utter darkness – what he terms a 'dense obscurity' – and when he draws up his blinds on the first morning at Limmeridge, '[a] confused sensation of having suddenly lost my familiarity with the past, without acquiring any additional clearness of idea in reference to the present or the future, took possession of my mind'.¹²⁰ Here, then, is the first step in the structural narrative progression – that of a break in continuity of the narrative consciousness. This sensation of spacelessness and timelessness, a lack of control over where he is or what he is destined to do, immediately relates Walter to the females of the house. Collins therefore abides by traditional standards to portray the central identity as male, yet undercuts this by making Walter a less than ideal hero (and someone employed in the household), placing the focus instead on Marian as his counterpart, or female double. Although she may also be said to be paired with Laura in this way, or indeed with the Countess, the present study will show that she is placed rather between two female doubles: firstly, Laura and Anne Catherick, and secondly Countess Fosco and Mrs Catherick. It is her interaction and association with them, interpreted through the themes involved in the structure of narrative progression, that drive her 'descent' and 'ascent'. Marian's androgyny, and the parallel of her experiences with Hartright's, nevertheless make her more clearly his double. Collins operates on two levels, then, in this text, for by presenting the narrative 'descent' and 'ascent' through Walter, he is also outlining another, more detailed and sympathetic, account of this narrative formula through Marian, by relating her experiences indirectly to Hartright's. These levels shall

¹²⁰ *The Woman in White*, edited with an introduction by John Sutherland, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp.30, 30-31. All quotations from *The Woman in White* are taken from this edition.

henceforth be referred to as primary and secondary – the first reflecting the hero's narrative progression, and the second Marian's.

Whereas Walter's first vivid impression of Limmeridge on the first gloriously sunny morning lingers in the reader's mind, Blackwater is 'the exact opposite of Limmeridge' – a place in which Marian Halcombe feels 'almost suffocated' (WW, p.199) – and is, appropriately, described for the reader by the woman most severely hemmed in by the patriarchal world that surrounds her. The gates that enclose Limmeridge House are transformed here into even more formidable barricades: '[t]he trees that shut out the view on all sides look dimly black and solid in the distance, like a great wall of rock' (p.204). Even when Marian and Laura venture beyond the grounds of the estates, they are almost always supervised or secretly watched by some male figure. The open green hills surrounding Limmeridge House are thus directly contrasted with the thick gloom of Blackwater, a gloom intensified by the many trees on the estate: 'the house is stifled by them. They are, for the most part, young, and planted far too thickly' (p.206). The opposition that is being constructed here begins to identify the nature of duality in the novel as stemming from patriarchal definitions of polarity. As such, the imagery of imprisonment through landscape that becomes increasingly apparent as the text develops is established as referring to the social strangulation of the female characters, especially in the light of Marian and Laura's removal from Limmeridge to Blackwater. The opposition in the make-up of these two estates (one that, as will be seen, is repeated more immediately within the grounds of Blackwater itself) is thus used to create tension within the narrative.

Just as Marian's narrative voice is used to explicate not only her own, but also Laura's imprisonment, her involvement in Blackwater is also important in this portrayal.

The first apparent opposition that Collins creates between Limmeridge and Blackwater is in their names: one is a 'house', the other a 'park'. This choice might at first seem contradictory, since it is in Blackwater that the women are apparently imprisoned: Philip O'Neill shows in his study, however, that Collins made extensive use of the idea of appearance and reality, and was apparently fascinated by the notion of things not being what they seem. Indeed, Limmeridge is both a place of safety and of danger to Laura and Marian, for although it is a haven in one sense, it also isolates them from contact with people and society. In the imprisoning Blackwater, similarly, that appearance and reality are once more confused, for it is here that the female characters' strength emerges. The strength that had been absent in Limmeridge, and which surfaces at Blackwater, is directly associated with the nature of the estate itself. In *Basil*, we see the narrator constructing the identity of the two central female characters through landscape, when he dreams of Margaret Sherwin, dark-haired, dark-skinned, clothed in dark robes and emerging as temptress from the dark vaporous woods and 'secret recesses' of threatening female sexuality.¹²¹ His virginal sister Clara, on the other hand, functions as her counterpart in this scene by descending, glowingly white, from the lofty hilltops. In *The Woman in White*, Collins develops this analogy to encompass the motifs of freedom and incarceration. The landscape of suffocating trees at Blackwater becomes, by the above analogy, a focal site of female sexuality and power, both of which are brought into play by Laura's marriage and Fosco's appearance, since both Glyde and Fosco represent a significant threat to female stability. Appropriately, refuge is sought in the dense and tangled foliage surrounding Blackwater Lake, the epicentre of this counteractive male-threatening *female* space. It is clear, therefore, that while Collins conforms to the

¹²¹ Edited with an introduction by Dorothy Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.46. All quotations from *Basil* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically

existence of a narrative 'descent', he attributes this stage with characteristics that affirm his interests and his desire to liberate the female characters.

A miniaturised antithesis within the landscape of Blackwater reflects the tensions that are being played out in the plot, in the struggle for power between the oppressed individual and the empowered patriarch. Developing the duality and friction which increasingly defines and informs Collins' representations of Victorian social standards, as well as outlining the condition of its women, we are presented with a direct inversion of Blackwater Lake in the more immediate grounds surrounding the house. Here, the "tamed" Countess Fosco walks repeatedly round and round what Marian describes as

[a] large circular fishpond, with stone sides and allegorical leaden monster in the middle, [which] occupies the centre of the square. The pond itself is full of gold and silver fish, and is encircled by a broad belt of the softest turf I ever walked on. (p.206)

Passing directly onwards to Blackwater Lake, Marian, walking through reed, rushes and thick trees, soon stands on what was once part of the lake, since dried up. Now only a third of the 'still, stagnant waters' remains. It is worth quoting Collins' description of the lake at some length, since it is important in affirming the parallel between his representations of cultivated and transgressive femininity through landscape, and thus ultimately in illustrating his subversion of the narrative 'descent'. Here

the trees rose thickly again, and shut out the view, and cast their black shadows on the sluggish, shallow water [...] the ground on the farther side was damp and

marshy, overgrown with rank grass and dismal willows. The water, which was clear enough on the open sandy side, where the sun shone, looked black and poisonous opposite to me, where it lay deeper under the shade of the spongy banks and the rank overhanging thickets and tangled trees. The frogs were croaking, and the rats were slipping in and out of the shadowy water, like live shadows themselves, as I got nearer to the marshy side of the lake. I saw here, lying half in and half out of the water, the rotten wreck of an overturned boat, with a sickly spot of sunlight glimmering through a gap in the trees on its dry surface, and a snake basking in the midst of the spot, fantastically coiled, and treacherously still. (p.207)

This scene serves primarily to highlight the representation of the Countess and Marian as instances of a woman tamed and controlled by her husband, and her younger counterpart resisting domination. The sense of distortion that separates the two areas is strengthened by their similarity, isolating the distinguishing factor as control. Thus, the 'softest turf' becomes 'rank grass'. The square in which the fishpond is situated is made up, we are told, 'by the three sides of the house, and by the lofty iron railings and gates which protect it in front' (p.206); these supposedly protective walls and barriers are reflected in the subversive space as 'rank overhanging thickets and tangled trees', the clear transparent water is here 'black and poisonous', its gold and silver fish now frogs and slithering rats, and even the central leaden monster-statue of the pond has assumed life and metamorphosed into a coiled snake. The fantastical, surreal quality of this space is important in emphasising the distance Marian is attempting to place between herself and the ruling order. The suggestions of imaginative liberty, as well as potential privacy, are characteristics central to this concept. The threat which this transgression posits to the

established order is imparted more clearly, however, in *No Name*, where the self-serving Mrs. Lecount's dangerous potential is also implied by her association with such a landscape. In this case, it is an aquarium which proves to be a precise miniature of Blackwater Lake, crawling with snails, tadpoles, efts, fish and frogs, rank with weeds and slime. Here again, a monstrous shape sits on a pyramid, in this instance a toad which Magdalen addresses as if it were Mrs. Lecount herself. In locating this as the site of transgressive Female power, and by further associating it with the grotesque, Collins emphasises the patriarchal denigration of subversive womanhood into the realms of the *unheimlich*, simultaneously underlining the relationship between Laura and Marian as that between opposing doubles, as *heimlich* and *unheimlich*. In realist terms, however, these landscapes retain power by being presented as successfully able to sustain their own independent ecosystems. Although marginalised, they are thus not eradicated. This is a vital aspect of Collins' representation of landscape, for it describes 'descent' in the narrative on two levels: firstly from a male perspective, where the subversive female is denied liberty and constrained within the framework of an underworld; and secondly, from a female perspective, in which such restriction is undercut when the character in question is enabled to locate the origin of her strength – in an anticipation of 'ascent' and wholeness – through the existence of a secondary narrative level.

The female's position as outlined here is elaborated further through a parallel of Marian's experience of Blackwater Park with Hartright's voyage to and within Central America. This likens the male's physical journey to the female's inner progression, and establishes Collins' subversion of the romance narrative as one based on gender. The manner in which we are allowed to see this voyage – through a trance-state – is highly significant, for it further refines the definition of the site and nature of the female's subversiveness, relating it here to an imaginary/supernatural dimension, in opposition to

the male hero's physical journey. The importance of dreams in Collins' novels has already been acknowledged in *Basil*, where the male narrator's dream depicts a more objective, even a more real, view of his world; Basil's dismissal of this knowledge is a fact which consequently undermines him by enabling the reader to see further than the narrator himself. Marian's dream occurs at a time when she is becoming increasingly aware of Laura's and her own danger, and of the ever-decreasing circle which is being drawn around them, hemming them – physically as well as metaphorically – closer together. This, in fact, will soon take shape in the imprisonment of Laura by her husband, echoed by Marian's helpless confinement during her illness. Thus, while Marian has become the central identity, her experiences are reflected by Laura's.

In a premonitory physical exhaustion, helplessness and fever of the mind, Marian falls into

a strange condition, which was not waking – for I knew nothing of what was going on about me; and not sleeping – for I was conscious of my own repose. In this state, my fevered mind broke loose from me, while my weary body was at rest; and, in a trance, or day-dream of my fancy – I know not what to call it – I saw Walter Hartright. (pp.277-78)

Marian loses the control usually exerted over her consciousness – in other words, that which was suppressed 'broke loose', and she enters a state beyond any previous experience, one to which she cannot even assign a name. In this condition, she foresees the perils that Walter will pass through and overcome, all described in a manner distinctly recalling her own description of the Blackwater estate. Indeed, the two have already been previously, albeit briefly, linked in Marian's first impressions of the Park:

unable to discern much in the deep gloom on the night of her arrival, she nevertheless receives the impression of suffocation by dense foliage, and hears the croaking of frogs, while 'the iron thumping of bolts and bars at the house door' suggest the prison that the mansion will become for her (p.199). It is no coincidence that, at precisely this moment, Walter enters her thoughts, and she recalls what she last read of him in a newspaper – that he and his fellow voyagers 'were last seen entering a wild primeval forest' (p.200). The parallel of Blackwater and Central America is hence rendered relevant to the theme of women's mental/spiritual escape from imprisonment, or the 'ascent' that refers to a secondary narrative level. Again, Laura ends a discussion about signing legal papers with 'suppose we go and dream away the afternoon in the grounds?' (p.230) By introducing an element of fantasy, initially in the outlandish description of Blackwater Lake, then more concretely by associating it with Marian's trance and the supernatural, Collins emphasises the female's present position in the underworld, and introduces an anticipation of liberation through fantasy/imagination that will eventually be enacted by Marian. It is important to note the dynamics which the doubles of Laura/Anne, and the Countess/Mrs Catherick contribute to the reader's understanding of Marian's position in this context, for it is through them that the terms of constraint are defined.

The shift that takes place from conscious awareness to a state of inner sight heralds the increasing importance of the inner life, as freedom of the body is gradually restricted. Prophecy, in this instance, affirms the acuity of this inner vision, when Marian sees a group of men lying on the steps of

an immense ruined temple. Colossal tropical trees – with rank creepers twining endlessly about their trunks, and hideous stone idols glimmering and grinning at intervals behind leaves and stalks and branches – surrounded the temple, and

shut out the sky, and threw a dismal shadow over the forlorn band of men on the steps. (p.278)

The displacement of her identity – through the likeness of this landscape to that of Blackwater – into a "male" role of physical freedom and adventure, describes the perception of this freedom as a "masculine" one. This displacement is aided by more minute similarities between the two regions: a ruined temple here replaces the 'half-ruined' wing of Blackwater (p.205); both are surrounded by dense trees, and even the stone idols are found in Blackwater in the shapes of the monster statue and motionless snake. The trees of Blackwater are likewise said to 'shut out the view, and cast their black shadows on the [...] water' (p.207). The possibility of merely transposing her own situation onto Walter's is ruled out when she goes on to foretell dangers which come to pass: the white mist-like wreaths of disease, dark men shooting arrows, and a wrecked ship. Again, distorted reflections of these can be seen at Blackwater. The smoke of Fosco's cigarettes, as well as the fog which hangs over the lake while she and Laura stroll there in private conversation both connote danger, and find an eventual outlet in the disease which kills Anne. The shooting arrows are similarly echoed in both Fosco's 'rod of iron' (p.225) and the walking-sticks that Glyde is continually cutting; the wrecked ship furthermore recalls the upturned boat on Blackwater Lake. These parallels, while hinting at the possibility of some form of freedom from the female's restriction, also suggest that this can only be accomplished through the acknowledgement and expression of her inner life. This is firmly characterised as Other in its relationship with mystery, darkness, prophecy, intuition, dream, danger, and the uncultivated, while female life and energy are given release through fantasy.

The relatedness of the landscape of the narrative underworld to the Foreign is unmistakable. In this respect, it is clear that foreign characters in these novels are described in similar terms to the subversive women who are associated with these regions. The frequency with which foreign characters are found in Collins' fiction accentuates the narrative focus on these female characters, and by doing so aids the shift in focus from primary to secondary narrative. Both share a physical appearance that is in some way remarkable. While this is based on androgyny in the case of the foreign characters (Count Fosco, Ozias Midwinter and Ezra Jennings are all examples of this), the female characters' Otherness is in turn related to a sense of foreignness. Thus Marian has a 'dark, clever, gipsy-face' (*WW*, pp.214-15), Margaret Sherwin's 'hair, eyes, and complexion were darker than usual in English women' (*B*, p.30), and Limping Lucy's face is 'dark, keen, clever'.¹²² Although Lydia Gwilt's flaming red hair does not obviously denote racial Otherness in *Armada*, her youth has been spent in the West Indies. Similarly, Rosanna Spearman bears the stigma of physical Otherness in her misshapen shoulder. The implications of this Otherness in the female's narrative 'descent' are clarified in *The Woman in White*, where Marian often feels 'that [Fosco's] mind is prying into mine' (p.269). And again,

his eyes seemed to reach my inmost soul through the thickening obscurity of the twilight. His voice trembled along every nerve in my body, and turned me hot and cold alternately. The mystery and terror of my dream [...] now oppressed my mind [...] I ran out [...] – ran out to hide from them in the darkness; to hide even from myself. (p.293)

¹²² *The Moonstone*, edited with an introduction by Anthea Trodd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.205. All quotations from *The Moonstone* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

The suffocating imagery elicited here is coupled with Marian's escape into darkness and 'obscurity' in the grounds of the estate, as well as in the reference to dreams. Her 'descent' into what she calls 'oppression' is hence closely related to Otherness as described through a sense of the Foreign. A distinct line is drawn between Order and Chaos, Reason and Imagination, Foreign and Domestic, as well as Masculine and Feminine in this way, marking the division and distinction between the primary narrative and the female-oriented secondary narrative. *The Moonstone* expresses this clearly when Murthwaite explains the opposition in the Indian character and the English one: '[t]he clairvoyance in this case is simply a development of the romantic side of the Indian character', he tells Mr. Bruff, but '[w]e have nothing whatever to do with clairvoyance, or with mesmerism, or with anything else that is hard of belief to a practical man', for the entire matter, he admits, is 'quite inconceivable, I grant you, to the English mind' (p.317).

Developing the tensions between Foreign and Domestic, *The Moonstone* foregrounds the issue by bringing the two together, using the gem of the title to draw the Indians to an English country house. Indeed, this nameless estate is inherently an allegorical space of conflict in the juxtaposition of its rose-garden with the Shivering Sands, a stagnant and destructive area of marsh. The two are separated by the natural barriers of a fir plantation. Social values, however, marginalise the Sands, accepting only the idealistic interpretation of the estate as an Edenic Garden. Several references are made to support this view: Gabriel Betteredge, in his search for a wife, compares himself to Adam in the Garden of Eden; Miss Clack writes of disciplining the fallen nature inherited from Adam, whilst also likening Rachel to Eve; while the Indians, attempting to enter and disrupt the equilibrium of the estate, are thus appropriately described as having a 'polite and snaky way' (*M*, pp.11, 214, 78). It is clear, therefore, that the estate

constitutes the upper level from which a 'descent' would ordinarily take place. The author, however, subverts this judgement, as will be demonstrated, in order to emphasise the fallacy of popular opinion.

Combining the Edenic analogies with the socially-evolved ideological construct of women, Collins adds yet another layer to his purposeful fabrication of an illusory, superficial world by contrasting women themselves to roses. The most forthright instance of this is found in Rosanna's name, while Sergeant Cuff, whose obsession with growing roses is constantly alluded to, looks at Penelope 'much as he had looked when he noticed the white musk rose in the flower-garden' (p.115). More subtle examples of this relationship appear in the grammatical construction which often alternates between the subject of roses and references to female characters: 'I think [...] that Lady Verinder is one of the cleverest women in England. I also think a rose much better worth looking at than a diamond' (pp.191-92). As the story develops, however, Collins uses this analogy to hint at the disaster to come. Sergeant Cuff is found repeatedly whistling 'The Last Rose of Summer', for instance, while, referring to Rosanna, he avers that

The ugly women have a bad time of it in this world; let's hope it will be made up to them in another. You have got a nice garden here, and a well-kept lawn. See for yourself how much better the flowers look with grass about them instead of gravel. No, thank you. I won't take a rose. It goes to my heart to break them off the stem. Just as it goes to your heart, you know, when there's something wrong in the servant's hall'. (pp.126-27)

From talking of the death of 'ugly women', the conversation swiftly veers to discuss matters of horticulture, at which point the thought of plucking and 'breaking' a rose

prompts the shift back to Rosanna's distress, a distress which will culminate in her suicide. The delineation of such an identity for women is seen to emanate from the appropriator of logic and order, and their confinement within this role is emphasised by the insular nature of the estate; appropriately (and ultimately ironically), Rosanna often goes to the Sands to, as she says, get a breath of fresh air. It begins to be clear, therefore, that the Edenic upper world is one that is here only deceptively ideal, for it is artificially constructed. Once again, it is in the perceived underworld of the Shivering Sands that the female character has access to her Self, and at least a comprehension of her own potential freedom. By imparting a sense of the social façade that colours the lives of the female characters, Collins makes the presence of a secondary narrative level all the more significant. The text anticipates a transcendence of such imposed and false perceptions in this way, looking forward to an 'ascent' on this level of the narrative.

Repeating the disruptive energy generated by the seemingly harmless gem, order is challenged and the senses deceived through the symbol of the rose, with all its connotations of control and possession. Franklin Blake, as the 'hero' of the text, becomes the passive figure around which the motif is developed in this manner as it becomes an emblem of love. Blake's appearance in the narrative with a rose in his button-hole triggers this development: his power over the three young women of the house – Rachel, Penelope and Rosanna – is significant through the pointed observation that his favourite walk is in the shrubbery leading to the rose-garden. Consequently, once his hold over Rachel is broken and she leaves the estate, she becomes 'a lily on its stem' (p.168), symbolically the flower of virtue (as its use by the Pre-Raphaelites shows, for example) as opposed to the red rose of love. The replacement of Rachel's gift of a rose with one of her own by Rosanna as a symbol of her love for Blake is made much of, while Penelope is also not insensitive to his charms. This supposition is drawn from her father's

unwitting comments: suggesting he look at her diary for reminders of dates and events, Gabriel Betteredge is met with 'a fierce look and a red face' from his daughter, at which he draws his conclusion of 'Sweethearts' (p.14). Furthermore, on being rejected by Rachel, Franklin Blake is watched by Penelope, and Gabriel, exiting the scene, wonders, '[p]erhaps, when my back was turned, he did call her in? In that case, it is only doing my daughter justice to declare that she would stick at nothing, in the way of comforting Mr. Franklin Blake' (p.180). Gabriel once again assumes that Penelope's tears on bidding Franklin Blake farewell are due to distress at recent events, and swiftly passes over their kiss goodbye. The constriction of the female identity is thus shown to take place through the often-misconceived perceptions and interpretations of a male order. As a result, Rosanna and Limping Lucy's refusal to be contained, either literally or figuratively, incites shock, disbelief and repulsion. Collins therefore reverses conventional perception by suggesting that it is the artificial and imposed construct of womanhood – that of the ideal, of the "rose" – that is itself imprisoning, and this must consequently be overcome in the narrative structure as it refers to the female identity.

There is a close relationship between Collins' application of the motif of roses and the idea of exploring foreign space, for both are portrayed as a desire to contain and possess the Other, enforcing their position in or as narrative underworlds. Rebecca Stott has observed, in reference to the fiction of Rider Haggard, that the male's exploration of unknown regions is presented through images of penetration into the female body of Africa, a body which threatens to awaken and avenge itself. She goes on to consider the landscape in *King Solomon's Mines*, the map of which 'forms an image of a headless female body turned upside down. The explorers must travel through 'Sheba's Breasts', down 'Solomon's Road' to a triangle of mountains, called the 'Three Witches', where they

must descend into the earth, into a pit, to find the treasure'.¹²³ Collins can be said to prefigure this aspect of imperialist fiction in his literature, for here too one may also trace a male yearning to map the regions of the female Other and contain it by doing so.¹²⁴ This appears time and again in his novels, where it is likewise associated with the violation of women's space, secrets, and existence. In *The Dead Secret*, for example, a letter of importance has been concealed in the disused Myrtle Room which, through Gothic associations with ghosts and spirits, comes to be perceived as a region beyond the limits of the acceptable, a space of the Other. The metaphors used to describe its neglect centre, however, around geography, for '[i]slands and continents of damp spread like the map of some strange region over the lofty vaulted ceiling'.¹²⁵ As a formula for exposing Mrs. Treverton's secret by discovering the whereabouts of her letter and consequently demystifying this space, Shrowl will later literally map out this area. In a similar vein, *The Woman in White*'s Walter Hartright acquires his masculinity through exploring and conquering the virgin forests of Central America, while *The Moonstone*'s Murthwaite intends returning to India and 'penetrating into regions left still unexplored' (M, p.313). While the male's and female's narratives of 'descent' and 'ascent' are thus paralleled through the relationship between the exploratory, outer adventure, and the inner movement towards knowledge, the completion of the male journey nevertheless operates to deny the fulfilment of the female's progression, as will become clear.

¹²³ *The Fabrication of the Late-Victorian femme fatale: The Kiss of Death* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1992), pp.89, 93.

¹²⁴ Lillian Nayder, in *Wilkie Collins* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997), writes of the dramatization of imperialism in *Armada*, *The Moonstone*, and *The New Magdalen*: '[p]unishing the imperialists for their misdeeds, Collins stages the reverse colonization of England by the Creoles and Hindus who invade the home country and threaten to colonize it' (p.101). She does not fully respond, however, to the presence of imperialism and conquest as Collins delineates it in relation to the female as Other.

¹²⁵ Edited with an introduction by Ira B. Nadel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.192. All quotations from *The Dead Secret* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

By moving the narrative away not only from urban but also from an overtly English landscape, Collins undercuts the contemporary idealisation of England, depicting the kind of which abounded in his father's paintings. He also foregrounds the relationship between the primary and secondary narratives by bringing the issues that concern them so closely into focus. This is achieved by allowing the presence of what is viewed within the narrative as a corruptive force, usually given the attributes of the Foreign. The author's interest in the deceptiveness of appearance and reality also comes into play here. Just as the plot of *The Moonstone* focuses attention away from the real culprit, there are clear implications that the corruption so feared and attributed to the Indians in fact *already exists* within the domestic space. Thus, while the namelessness of the house and grounds, together with the emphasis on the maintenance of boundaries guarded by dogs as well as locked doors and gates, suggests the protection of an unspoiled Eden, Man, as Miss Clack points out, has already fallen. While India constitutes the clearly defined space of the Other kept separate in *The Moonstone*, this fall is symbolised by the presence of a space of subversiveness inherent within the bounds of the country estate itself: the Shivering Sands. This area is in fact drawn using terms that relate it to the Indians, for it has a 'broad brown face' that appears to be alive, twitching and trembling with anticipation (p.28). Despite the apparent separation of the two landscapes, then, Collins suggests that they are disassociated only by imposed and false perception. By instituting such notions of illusion and reality, objectivity and subjectivity, then, the author can more effectively illustrate how the female identity, imprisoned in this narrative underworld, may access the means (disruptive to the hierarchical principals) whereby she can attain Self-knowledge and a form of liberation.

The presence of subversiveness within the Edenic bounds is also signalled by the object at the heart of the novel, the moonstone itself – '[w]e set it in the sun, and then

shut the light out of the room, and it shone awfully out of the depths of its own brightness, with a moony gleam, in the dark' (pp.68-9). The gem's power is thus sensed as being a part of its association with the area of its origin 'beyond the civilised limits' (p.81). It is furthermore clearly presented as being in some way a female symbol: Lonoff observes that 'in one of the pages that [Collins] read in King's book there is a description of a diamond that the Indians had tried to fashion in the shape of a Yoni, the symbol of the female genitalia; it was broken in two in the year of the Sepoy mutiny'.¹²⁶ Collins' clearly intentional desire to forge an alliance between English and Foreign both in *The Moonstone* and in *The Woman in White* is given further relevance in view of the author's inquiries of an Anglo-Indian family member, John William Shaw Wyllie, who 'answered Collins' query about the possibility of a high-caste Brahmin in service to a Hindu shrine making the forbidden "passage of the Black Water" and later regaining admission to his caste'.¹²⁷ The naming of Blackwater Park, its 'forbidden' nature, and the Indian element of the later novel thus illustrate a clear preoccupation with drawing analogies between foreign and domestic, and the female's shift into an underworld is only a result of the *recognition* that this has already previously taken place; or in other words, a *recognition* of the existing imprisonment of the Self. Although, because of this highly subjective vision, the narrative suggests that a reversal may indeed enable liberation for the imprisoned "secondary" identity, the deceptive nature of this underworld simultaneously precludes the possibility of ultimate success.

It is significant that, in both *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, the disempowered male's status is re-established not only through the conquest of this spatial

¹²⁶ Lonoff, Sue, *Wilkie Collins and his Victorian Readers: A Study in the Rhetoric of Authorship* (New York: AMS Press, 1982), p.210, referring to C. W. King's *The Natural History, Ancient and Modern, of Precious Stones and Gems and of the Precious Metals* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1865), p.36.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p.177.

Other, but also through the death of the female figure associated with it. The victory over this space – be it abroad or within the boundaries of the domestic – is presented in sexual, and therefore in personal, terms. Hartright's and Murthwaite's experiences in Central America and India respectively are thus echoed by Franklin Blake's desire to unveil Rosanna's secret by penetrating the Shivering Sands, an image critically acknowledged as being sexual in nature. Accordingly, the box concealed beneath the Sands and containing this secret is described as having been made to hold a ship's 'maps and charts' (*M*, p.142) to protect them from being destroyed by water, once again drawing on the analogy of travel and exploration in connection with the "possession" of women's lives. Rosanna's box, wrapped in chains as it is, embodies the site of conflict in this case, and is violated by Franklin Blake in his attempt to chart the unexplored, 'the unmapped region of the female mind and female sexuality' which Freud refers to as 'the dark continent' ¹²⁸. This metaphorical deflowering, amid numerous images of roses in the text, is also played out in the painting of Rachel's door, an activity that unites images of landscape with those of violated womanhood. Betteredge indeed considers this only one among many useless pastimes of the gentlefolk, who take pleasure in dissecting nature, 'spoiling a pretty flower with pointed instruments, out of a stupid curiosity to know what the flower is made of' (*M*, p.55). Such a perspective will become clearer in the final consideration of the success of the primary narrative progression, and the extent to which this depends on the relative failure of the secondary narrative.

Wilkie Collins uses landscape to imply a break in consciousness, as is clear in *The Woman in White*, as well as to outline a narrative 'descent', one that is recognised as being a metaphor for social restraint, especially in its association with foreign landscape, and with foreign characters who are persecuted within the narrative. A parallel 'descent'

¹²⁸ Stott, p.27.

is seen in the primary plot of the narrative as it relates to the male hero – for instance in Hartright's journey to Central America, or in the accusation aimed at Franklin Blake of having stolen the moonstone. It is the imaginary and creative transformation of the existing landscape, however, that is made relevant to the female character's position, and her 'descent', which is characterised through a framework of subjectivity.¹²⁹ She remains passive to external circumstances operating in the 'descent', and is increasingly helpless against her enforced situation, a predicament the author highlights by identifying her with animals. The imagery of imprisonment and narrative 'descent' that Collins draws in his depiction of landscape takes on a far clearer form in the metaphor of women as pet animals, as will be illustrated in the following section.

ii. Animals

The parallel of women with animals is dominant in Collins' work and, although a crudely obvious analogy, is nevertheless relevant to ascertaining the author's intentions in depicting his female characters and their relationship with the physical world. Indeed, their position in a narrative underworld, as well as the causes for it, are left beyond doubt through such references. As already mentioned, such an identification of women with animals was an image often evoked by Victorian painters, notably the members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Collins, familiar with the Brotherhood and their work, also chose to include this device in his fiction to much the same effect. The motif assumes a more developed form in its narrative element, however, through its expansive interaction with other themes such as landscape. The female characters, confined through devotion, force, and social claims, are invariably related to the caged animals and pet dogs found in

¹²⁹ This is one of many indications of reliance on Gothic literature, in which the persecuted heroine's situation is frequently interpreted through a veil of subjectivity, a perspective that in itself renders her

these novels. This is clear in *Basil's* portrayal of Margaret Sherwin's caged bird, eventually killed by the family cat; and, in the same manner, of Lucilla Finch, imprisoned in darkness, whose name is played upon in the chapter title 'A Cage of Finches'.¹³⁰

This juxtaposition appears most consistently in *The Woman in White*, which also deals overtly with imprisonment. The most obvious analogy here is one between women and dogs, first mentioned by Marian as she rages at the men who 'fasten our helpless lives to theirs as they chain up a dog to his kennel' (WW, p.183). Although she herself is never directly introduced into this analogy by Collins, Laura and Anne – both of whom are at one point literally imprisoned by Glyde – are. Her exclusion in this sense is not hugely significant, however, for what is important in regard to the present study has already been outlined in the introduction to this thesis as either association or identification with an animal or animals; it is consequently through Marian's relation to Laura and Anne, and the Countess and Mrs Catherick, that her own narrative progression is described. While Northrop Frye briefly mentions *The Woman in White* in *The Secular Scripture* by noting that Sir Percival's eventual persecution involves a reversal of the imagery of hunting in the narrative, he does not explore the theme as it refers to the female characters. In this respect, his narrative analysis remains focused on a primary narrative plot. The unmistakable relation between women and animals in this text, however, while consolidating their own 'descent', also shifts the narrative focus onto a different level. Laura, for instance, is seen to possess the same instinct that makes her pet greyhound bark and snap at the baronet for no apparent reason. Her dislike of Fosco

helpless, and defines her 'descent'.

¹³⁰ *Poor Miss Finch*, edited with an introduction by Catherine Peters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), chapter 6. All quotations from *Poor Miss Finch* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

is also immediate and intuitive, and is explained by Marian as a childlike instinct of recognizing enemies. Similarly, when her double, Anne, is duped into going to London, she too is seen to possess this instinctive sixth sense, for 'if she had scented danger in the air, as a dog scents the presence of some creature unseen, her alarm could not have displayed itself more suddenly and more causelessly' (p.624). The comparison of both Laura and Anne to pet dogs serves to unite them as doubles, as well as emphasising their helplessness. Marian, in contrast, remains apart from such identification. Indeed, her only direct relation to an animal is in giving aid to the dying dog she finds in the boat-house, and places her in a more active position. This is supported by the subtle reference to the emblem on her letter-seal, which shows 'the common device of two doves drinking out of the same cup' (p.309). While these two mirrored, white, docile, domesticated pets are surely replicas of the two identical and helpless women in white, they also suggest the liberation that Marian will experience through writing.

Count Fosco's extraordinary fondness for and control over animals distinguishes him as a foreigner, and reflects his position concerning the women of the text, whom he flatters, coaxes, and terrifies into some form of submission. His wife accordingly wears the choking collar – that of 'a faithful dog' (p.219) – that signifies her complete subservience to her husband. This power is evident when Fosco is seen to tame, within moments, a savage bloodhound feared by all. There is in addition a paternal element to his regard and power over animals, one that is made clear in references to his pet mice: 'shall I leave my forlorn white children at the mercies of the dogs? Ah, never!' He chirruped paternally at his small white children through the bars of the pagoda' (pp.232-33). This introduces a paradox in the Count's nature which he himself has identified, and which is manifest in his genuine sympathy for Anne in her illness, despite his resolution to carry through the set plan. It is also present in his continuous avowals of paternal

feelings towards Marian, whom he treats 'with fatherly care' (p.622) during her illness, although this is clearly only one aspect of a more complex relationship.

This false exterior also comes into play in the Count's continuous interference on Glyde's behalf, for he is a man who believes in the most delicate way of achieving results. His gallantry towards the female characters directly echoes his fondness for his pets, while also highlighting one source of his power. Such a comparison is given direct expression when the Count, in backing up an argument, takes one of the mice and "transforms" it into a lady who may marry either a poor or a rich man, then "transforms" it back into a mouse again. The parallel between these pets and the female characters grows even more direct with the escape of 'the youngest, the whitest, the most amiable of all' (p.240) in the boat-house, the exact spot where the escaped Anne Catherick, the "whitest" and mentally most innocent and "young" of the characters, chooses to meet with Laura. In fact, it is in stooping to search for his lost pet that Fosco is startled to find the patch of blood that presages Anne's death. Marian's desire to reverse the balance of power also finds expression through this metaphor, when she envisions the Count in a dungeon, with the tiny creatures crawling all over his vast body, an anticipation of his final resting-place in the Paris morgue. The desire of the non-conforming woman to empower herself by controlling the male protagonist is a vital part of the plot in *Basil*, where the narrator's gullibility provides the key to such an inversion, and where it is also presented through this theme. The seductive Margaret Sherwin's caged canary, while indicating the submissive role into which Basil wishes to place its owner, is consequently also construed as a metaphor for his own duped affection:

She was standing opposite to [the bird-cage], making a plaything for the poor captive canary of a piece of sugar, which she rapidly offered and drew back

again, now at one bar of the cage, and now at another. The bird hopped and fluttered up and down in his prison after the sugar, chirping as if he enjoyed playing *his* part of the game with his mistress. (*B*, p.37, author's italics)

This enactment of Basil's sexual baiting is emphasised by Collins' italicized reference to the bird as 'he'.

While many of the parallels drawn between women and pets are obvious, Collins includes an additional perspective to the theme which is more particular to his work. Whereas the Pre-Raphaelites' depictions of confined womanhood were largely symbolised by lap-dogs or caged birds, an image drawn upon here, the transgression enacted in Collins' plots is represented in a different way. The result is an analogy that would have disconcerted the Victorian reader in its suggestion of womens' danger and subversiveness, for a suppressed female power in his villainous female characters – notably the Countess and Mrs. Catherick – is implied through images of monstrosity. The two women share a malicious nature, and constitute the antagonistic double to Laura and Anne. While these latter are compared to doves, dogs and mice, an opposing set of imagery is used in the portrayal of the older women. Like the grotesque leaden statue around which she walks, the Countess herself is also 'always, morning, noon, and night, indoors and out, fair weather or foul, as cold as a statue, and as impenetrable as the stone out of which it is cut' (*WW*, p.219). On a similar note, Mrs. Catherick is described in terms of a rigid construction in the squareness and colourlessness of her face, as well as in the implacable emotionless stare with which she meets Hartright. It is as a revolt against the repression exercised over these women that images of wild and dangerous animals appear in this context: the Countess's 'tigerish jealousy' (an adjective also used of Mrs. Lecount in *No Name*) constitutes a latent danger which even Fosco must always be

on his guard against and must instantly soothe. This is an adjective also used to impart the threatening acuity of the feminised Indians in *The Moonstone*, where their 'tigerish quickness' endangers the insular household's security (p.78). A more central and striking image connoting danger, however, is that of a treacherously coiled and menacing snake. It is through this metaphor that the reader senses the dormant threat behind the Countess' composed exterior. To this end, Collins repeatedly allows her to cast 'viperish look[s]' at other characters, even though, under her husband's influence, she remains 'as cool [...] as a fish in the pond outside' (WW, pp.611, 269). Similarly, beneath Mrs. Catherick's stolid appearance, Hartright recognises hidden 'in its lair the serpent-hatred of years [...] [l]ike a lurking reptile, it leapt up at me [...] [l]ike a lurking reptile, it dropped out of sight again' (p.499). There is an implication, however, that this hatred has succeeded in destroying its intended victim when Sir Percival is killed, for the fire in the vestry is described as 'leap[ing] out like a wild beast from its lair' (p.528).

The latent power that Collins wishes to evoke through using the symbol of the snake may well have come close to constituting a more central part of *The Moonstone*, which was originally to be called *The Serpent's Eye*.¹³¹ Although this title was discarded, its implications nevertheless remain evident in the role of the Indians, who, as the gem's idolaters, are feared as a corruptive force seeking to enter the Edenic country estate.

The metaphor assumes an aspect of male-threatening sexuality in other texts, underlining the element of fear involved in the female characters' enforced imprisonment within their narrative underworld. In *Basil*, Margaret Sherwin, for instance, is recognised by the hero's subconscious as a seductress whose 'eyes were lustrous and fascinating as the eyes of a serpent' (p.45). Magdalen Vanstone, the heroine of *No Name*, also possesses a vibrant physicality that is 'instinct with [...] a seductive, serpentine suppleness', and a

'seductive serpentine grace'.¹³² Female sexual power is also associated with this symbol in George Egerton's 'A Cross Line', in which a pregnant woman's power-fantasies include riding a horse in Arabia, surrounded by dark faces, and being on a theatrical stage, covered in snakes.¹³³ Rider Haggard's *She* similarly relates female sexual power to foreign places through using the snake-symbol, for Ayesha, dressed deceptively in simple white, wears a belt showing a double-headed snake. Her power in this case is defused, however, by her death, which is enacted as 'a dramatization of the evolutionary concept of retrogressive evolution'.¹³⁴

Collins thus applies the motifs of tame and wild animals to illustrate, if rather crudely, the opposing doubles of subservient and transgressive women, and defines, through Marian's relationship to both, her narrative 'descent'. Through the themes of landscape and animals in relation to narrative structure, it has become clear that a division has occurred between the primary and secondary narratives, clarifying the role which the first plays in the imprisonment of the female identity within a state of 'descent'. The terms of confinement have also been defined, and revolve around social issues; the inclusion of socially subversive themes, such as the Foreign, has heightened the tension between the two narrative levels by ascribing danger to one, and fixing it as the alien Other. The subversiveness within the idealised construct has nevertheless begun to be exposed by Collins as one that is falsely described by social values. The growth of interest in the secondary narrative consequently anticipates a transcendence of restricting factors. This is explored in the following section.

¹³¹ Lonoff, p.210.

¹³² Edited with an introduction by Virginia Blain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.14, 45. All quotations from *No Name* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

¹³³ Pykett, 1995, p.63, quoting John Lance in *Keynotes* (1893), pp.17, 19-20.

3.3 Themes of 'Ascent'

i. Writing Woman

The hypocrisy that enforced social role-playing in Victorian England was one that beyond doubt concerned and fascinated Collins. Its implications were, however, inevitably more severe on women, and the author places this concern at the heart of his best novels. The present study has attempted to illustrate not only the direct, but also the more circuitous means through which the author depicts this. Essential is the fact that the plot of these novels often hinges on matters of identity and truth. It is the pursuit and disclosure of the truth, indeed, that shapes the narrative, and the early introduction of the detective theme by Collins serves to dramatize this very process.¹³⁵ Although such an act of deconstruction elicits a departure from social rigidities, the detective theme nevertheless operates and is included within social conventions, and therefore, paradoxically, participates by and large in its values. It may furthermore be seen as enacting a division from the narrative underworld through solving crime or mystery, for, like comedy, it also charts a movement 'from subjective illusion to an acceptance of the standards of society, as a superior norm'.¹³⁶ The detective theme operates to re-establish the order that has been upset during the course – usually at the start – of the narrative, and is, 'in a comic context, an epiphany of law, a balancing and neutralizing activity in society, the murderer discovered at the end balancing the corpse that we normally find at the beginning'.¹³⁷ The predominance of the detective theme in Collins' novels therefore functions on a primary narrative level to illustrate the upset order of the patriarchal world, and recover its supposedly objective truth. The (usually) female progression, on

¹³⁴ Stott, p.114.

¹³⁵ For a fuller discussion of Wilkie Collins and the detective genre, see D. A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), which explores the theme in the novels of Dickens and Trollope as well as Collins.

¹³⁶ Frye, p.138.

the other hand, operates in a contrary direction, turning to fantasy rather than realism, and focusing on the inner imaginary rather than the physical world as a means of discovering a *subjective* truth and wholeness of the Self.

Collins' treatment of the themes of landscape and animals in his novels subverts the everyday in order to expose social hypocrisies through repeated images of imprisonment and confinement. This is, as expected, closely related to doubling in the text. In Collins' work, indeed, this assumes unusual proportions, creating a confusion of doubles amongst whom the central identity becomes swamped. The often claustrophobic atmosphere that is created in the narrative's denial of physical freedom is made virtually complete by the growing threat of the denial of mental and spiritual freedom as well, as references to mind-reading and "magnetism" infer. Collins develops the theme of personal liberty not, as one might expect, through the narrative development of the theme of hypnosis or mind-reading but, in a gesture more typical of this author, by introducing it where less expected. Despite the fact that the themes of landscape and animals, although accentuating the female's need and desire for liberty, prove ineffective in providing it, they nevertheless serve an important purpose in this context by introducing the element of imagination. This is effected by a tension between domestic and exotic: the tame pets are thus countered by fabulous snakes and mythical monsters, while cultivated lawns and rose-gardens are overshadowed by landscapes that seem displaced in their outlandishness. By establishing the imaginary as Other in this way, Collins creates a clear bond between this subversive force and the women of the text, and goes on to develop the theme as a means of the imprisoned female's 'ascent', as will be illustrated in this section. *The Secular Scripture*, by focusing on the primary level as seen in the detective theme, limits this 'ascent' to one affecting only the hero. The present

¹³⁷ Ibid, p.137.

study will show, however, that the hero's counterpart is also allowed a narrative 'ascent' by Collins on another level. Just as the detective theme enacts 'conscious detachment' through 'recognizing the demonic as demonic' and effects a movement away from the double in this manner,¹³⁸ the female's 'ascent' also aims at wholeness. It does so by focusing on the unity of identity, and allowing the integration of the Self through writing in a private – "free" – context to take place. The character's objective and subjective existences are thus opposed in this sense, and their 'ascent' on one level of consciousness remains entirely independent of the other. This section will focus on the female's subjective 'ascent', as a process which is more subtly defined, as well as constituting a more profound level of narrative structure.

'[I]t is primarily the males of a society who are accorded the social and *spatial* mobility they require to enter the imaginary 'elsewhere'': Paul Coates' statement, in focusing on the relationship between writing women and physical space, casts an important light on the writing of women not only in the historical context in which it was meant, but also in the literary context in which Collins employs it.¹³⁹ Echoing the experiences of women such as Christina Rossetti and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, women's writing in these texts is almost always depicted as a highly private and always personal activity which inevitably takes place in private apartments and behind closed doors. The exception to this is the signing of legal papers, an area presented beyond doubt as a male one, and as such often used to deprive the female characters of their possessions, stability, and even identity. The very plot of *The Dead Secret*, indeed, depends on a dying wife's physical incapacity to write the necessary letter to her husband, and the subsequent concealment of this confession by her maid in a deserted

¹³⁸ Ibid, p.137.

¹³⁹ Coates, Paul, *The Double and the Other: Identity as Ideology in Post-Romantic Fiction* (London:

room of the house. Although in *Poor Miss Finch* we see a metaphorical imprisonment of Lucilla Finch in blindness, as she herself recognises, this confinement generally takes the form of a more literal incarceration; Lydia Gwilt and Marian Halcombe, for instance, write mostly under cover of night as an additional blanket to secrecy. Letters are in addition often sent and received by female characters in secrecy, and are often the means of exposing them to danger.

By inferring that privacy functions as the catalyst for such expression, Collins binds the ideas of possession, secrecy, confinement and identity even more closely together, and makes their relationship to female liberty in the text clear. Whereas the plot operates on levels of legal and institutional ambiguities and deceptions to confiscate possessions, expose secrets and deny liberty and identity, the imaginary is developed through the theme of writing to establish the female character's autonomy by reinstating these threatened elements. Although Jennifer Gribble refers to the theme of the incarcerated woman as explored in the works of Jane Austen, George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Hardy, Henry James, D. H. Lawrence, and later Woolf and Joyce, there is no mention of Collins, to whose work, as the present study will show, the concept is central. The importance of the secret journal in the context of confined womanhood cannot be overestimated in either *The Woman in White*, *The Moonstone* or *Armada*, and effectively replaces the tapestry of 'The Lady of Shalott'. Writing is often – for Lydia and Marian especially so – a means of escape from their "real" existence, a diversion from tedium and a relief from pent-up emotions. In *The Moonstone*, similarly, Rosanna Spearman, imprisoned within her social role, must write down her true feelings.

Collins' recognition of the nature of life for many Victorian women is voiced when the omniscient narrator of *Armada* exclaims:

In the miserable monotony of the lives led by a large section of the middle classes of England, anything is welcome to the women which offers them any sort of harmless refuge from the established tyranny of the principle that all happiness begins and ends at home.¹⁴⁰

Although this statement is made with tongue in cheek – for it comes at a point in the narrative when the scheming Dr. Downward has invited the ladies of the neighbourhood to view his sanatorium – the truth of it remains intact. The 'miserable monotony' of the women's socially-imprisoned lives is often more clearly perpetrated in the text by true incarceration in asylums like this one; here, however, the meaning of the word 'asylum' is obscured by speaking of it as a provider of 'harmless refuge'. The desire to demystify women's natures by infantilising them in this way is undercut only by the actions of Lydia, the female villain whose accomplice the doctor is, and whose diversions are anything but harmless. Even she, however, is threatened with incarceration in this very 'asylum' towards the end of the novel; while exposing social hypocrisies, 'the established tyranny of a principle' suggests that society is itself merely a larger-scale asylum, and highlights the condition of the female characters' state of 'descent'. In *Basil*, this is evident not only through plot (the invalid Mrs. Sherwin, for instance, remains housebound) but is more apparent in the conscious desire of the first person narrator to ascribe fixed roles to the female characters. The extent to which Clara, the narrator's sister, is "created" by her brother and father's notions of her is seen, for example, when

¹⁴⁰ Edited with an introduction by Catherine Peters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp.621-22. All quotations from *Armadale* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

she enters unbidden into her father's study in the middle of an argument to plead that Basil shall not be banished from the house:

The silence and suddenness of her entrance at such a moment; the look of terror which changed to unnatural vacancy the wonted softness and gentleness of her eyes, her pale face, her white dress, and slow, noiseless step, made her first appearance in the room seem almost supernatural; it was as if an apparition had been walking towards us, and not Clara herself! (pp.205-6)

This reliance of reader on narrator thus contributes to the male framework of the novel in the delineation of boundaries fixed by the narrator's conscious mind, one that is in this case unreliable.

While Collins' use of the railway in his fiction highlights the role of movement and communication in the novel's world, writing is also treated as a vital life-line with the outer world for the static female, and is accordingly attributed with power. 'In the creation, the word was in the beginning through the agency and power of the male divinity and this power has been transmitted to men'.¹⁴¹ Enforcing this traditional concept, while also mimicking the social order of the world of the text, women's writing is forced by the male narrators into a liminal role within the primary narrative structure, where its value is undermined. In *The Moonstone*, the first example of this refers to Penelope: her father's inability to begin his narrative (an inability which is echoed by Franklin Blake, who sits absent-mindedly drawing hieroglyphics on the window-pane) is resolved both by her accurate memory and detailed diary. It is only with the aid of these that Betteredge is finally able to begin his story at the third attempt; having supplied the

¹⁴¹ Landy, Marcia, in *The Authority of Experience: Essays in Feminist Criticism*, p.26.

primary impetus, Penelope's diary is also used in referring to subsequent dates and events. Male control over female writing continues, however: having given an account of his daughter's testimony to the sergeant, the precision of which establishes her as chief observer in the text, Betteredge ends the paragraph of *Penelope's* words with '[s]igned, Gabriel Betteredge' (p.115). Further instances of such domination include Franklin Blake forcing a letter of introduction to the local magistrate from his aunt – '[h]e put pen, ink, and paper before his aunt, who (as it appeared to [Betteredge]) wrote the letter he wanted a little unwillingly' (p.89); and Betteredge 'translat[ing] Mrs. Yolland out of the Yorkshire language into the English language' (p.140). The only woman afforded an entirely direct narrative – Miss Clack – produces it, even then, within strict limitations, having been regimentally taught by her parents to keep a diary as an aid in disciplining her "fallen" nature. In addition, she is caricatured through her evangelical preaching, and the reader is consequently encouraged to sneer at her.

In *The Woman in White*, the narrative frame is a male one constructed and edited by Hartright, and both begins and ends with his narrative. Within this are sandwiched the accounts of the female characters – Anne Catherick, Marian Halcombe, Hester Pinhorn, and the housekeeper. The control over the text is thus established at the start as belonging to Hartright, who even refers to his charting of events in this manner as a 'chain' that 'reaches fairly from the outset of the story to the close' (p.636). Yet even in the opening paragraphs, the appearance of a non-conformative woman disrupts his creativity, rendering it impotent: 'I sat down and tried, first to sketch, then to read – but the woman in white got between me and my pencil, between me and my book' (p.29). It is this lost strength and proficiency that Hartright will later attempt to re-establish by voyaging through Central America in search of his manhood; subsequently, this will be enforced in the latter half of the book in his repeated descriptions of broken womanhood,

as well as in his "creation" of the text itself. Walter's initial subservience to writing, however, is also illustrated when he receives a note from Mr Fairlie permitting him to discontinue his service at Limmeridge. Walter's bitterness at this essentially feminised note – '[i]t was written with beautiful regularity and neatness of character, in violet-coloured ink, on note-paper as smooth as ivory and almost as thick as cardboard' (p.110) – from a character he has himself already likened to a woman, is later reversed when he is re-established in Limmeridge as its master.

Male dominance over the female voice is shown once more with Mrs. Catherick's letter, enclosed within the lawyer, Gilmore's, narrative. It has been dictated to her by Sir Percival, and is essentially brief, cold, and strictly to the point. Indeed, we are also told of a letter written to the lawyer by Marian notifying him of Laura's engagement and wedding date:

In six lines my correspondent announced the proposed marriage; in three more, she told me that Sir Percival had left Cumberland to return to his house in Hampshire; and in two concluding sentences she informed me, first that Laura was sadly in want of change and cheerful society; secondly, that she had resolved to try the effect of some such change forthwith, by taking her sister away with her on a visit to certain old friends in Yorkshire. There the letter ended. (p.148)

This letter, or rather the abrupt nature of it, upsets Gilmore by being uncharacteristic of its writer. The problem of male interpretation of women's actions and behaviour in the text is raised here as an issue of some importance; Marian's letter, for example, is not quoted, but is in fact virtually reworded by Gilmore who, as a lawyer and a man of logic,

recreates it mathematically, casting his own interpretation onto it. This has in fact already often proven to be mistaken. Marian's silence and abruptness, in truth concern for Laura, for instance, are read by the lawyer as her inability to lose gracefully at a game of cards. Similarly, Sir Percival, seeing Laura's changed demeanour, her flushed face and unnaturally bright eyes, 'interprets it [...] to his own advantage'; whereas it is merely a symptom of her painful resignation, 'he welcomes [it] as the return of her beauty and the recovery of her spirits' (p.190).

Within this male narrative framework, one echoed by the physical and social restrictions imposed on the female characters within the plot, the act of women writing is presented as being a clearly male-threatening activity and consequently works against the primary re-establishment of order through the detective theme, as its secrecy implies. Sarah Leeson hiding the deathbed letter, Anne Catherick's written warning to Laura, Marian's intercepted letters to Laura's legal advisors, and Rosanna Spearman's buried knowledge – one that Franklin Blake does not even condescend to finish reading – are examples of this. Distinguishing between such women and their submissive counterparts, Collins exploits the Victorian propensity to compartmentalize women's identities into polar extremes by applying the epithets of angel and devil to some of the central female characters, fulfilling the expectations of primary narrative ethics. Toril Moi, in speaking of women authors as the possessors of power, remarks that 'behind the angel lurks the monster: the obverse of the male idealization of femininity.'¹⁴² This comparison is indeed one made by Marian herself, who likens Laura to an angel and herself by implication to a devil; it is she, accordingly, who takes up the pen. The fact that the angel-devil epithet is purely a socially-determined one is clarified when the novel's hero and ultimately its patriarchal figure, Walter Hartright, judges Marian in this way; although attracted to her

figure and carriage at first sight, her face is immediately categorised as being 'ugly', a mask of the monster on the body of an angel. Indeed, this judgement is passed only when Marian draws near enough for Walter to see her eyes, which are 'piercing' and 'resolute', and her expression, which is 'bright, frank, and intelligent' (WW, p.32). The threat posed by Marian is implied as being one based on her intelligence and strength of character, and is without hesitation transcribed and interpreted as masculinity – the ultimate unacceptable in a woman, being also the ultimate transgression – by Hartright. Accordingly, when Marian is transformed by illness towards the close of the novel into a passive figure of the ideal of Victorian womanhood, she becomes 'the good angel' of Hartright and Laura's lives (p.643). In drawing Marian's body and character, and in having them initially interpreted by Hartright in this manner, Collins may well have been thinking of scientific theories current at the time which stated that 'the development of a woman's brain induced the womb to atrophy' and was thus 'both the cause and consequence of her resisting traditional womanly roles'.¹⁴³ Writing is without doubt presented as such a masculating activity. In *No Name*, on the other hand, this takes the form of acting. Accordingly, Magdalen not only challenges Captain Wragge's scheming mind, striking fear into the heart of the generally fearless Captain, but is also said to show the cloven foot (p.243).

The metaphors of angel and devil that are applied to Laura and Marian appear again in *Armadale*, where they are bound together in the character of Lydia Gwilt, in an instance of the divided Self. The internal conflict concerning her love for Midwinter is expressed as a struggle between these two sides: 'Oh, you Devil tempting me, is there no Angel near, to raise some timely obstacle between this and to-morrow, which might help

¹⁴² *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London: Routledge, 1990), p.58.

¹⁴³ Pykett, 1992, p.140.

me to give [marriage to Midwinter] up?' (p.436) The co-existence of these two opposed sides is presented in its most accessible form to the Victorian reader as a discrepancy between appearance and character. The fact that Collins had created a female villain whose crimes were not plainly written on her face for all to see resulted in uproar by many critics.¹⁴⁴ The demonising of Lydia, a woman whose power is manifest in her writing, contains decided parallels to the masculinisation of Marian: in both cases, this "deformity" is a result of, as well as the cause for, writing.

Female writing within the text functions by effecting a secondary narrative 'ascent', and defining this structural stage as independent of its parallel narrative progression. Integration and wholeness of the Self will therefore be achieved on a level structured around subjectivity and imagination, and hence antagonistic to the realist mode of the primary narrative. Having established the setting of the novel as a male-dominated one inhibiting women's freedom both through narrative structure and through plot, Marian Halcombe's narrative is accordingly placed amongst those of the male characters. Nevertheless, this is presented as the free expression of a female voice to which the reader is given direct access, a rare occurrence in sensation fiction. There is, moreover, a clear sense that the writer is empowered through this activity. On the eve of Laura's marriage, for instance, Marian laments the absence of a male member of the family: '[n]o father, no brother – no living creature but the helpless, useless woman who writes these sad lines' (WW, p.197). The pen with which she writes will in fact become Marian's primary weapon. Similarly, Mrs. Lecount's power over her young master in *No Name* is asserted through actually *being* this instrument, for she is, as she observes, 'the pen he holds, if you will excuse the expression – nothing more' (NN, p.278). Indeed, this is a role she almost literally embodies, undertaking to write all his dictated letters and

¹⁴⁴ Peters, p.272.

documents, whilst slyly influencing their content. The act of writing is associated with the female characters even more closely by being a means of prophecy: thus Marian feels 'as if writing of [Laura's] marriage were like writing of her death' (WW, p.187). It is even suggested that writing gives rise to this "sixth sense" in her, for Marian's instinctive dislike of Sir Percival expresses itself *in spite of her* on paper. She vows that 'I must and will break myself of this unworthy tendency, even though the effort should force me to close the pages of my journal till the marriage is over! I am seriously dissatisfied with myself – I will write no more today' (p.189). Although, after the lapse of a fortnight, this objective appears to have been achieved, her pen soon voices this instinctive knowledge once again: '[i]n three words – how glibly *my pen* writes them! – in three words, I hate him' (p.194, *my italics*). It is her pen that likewise expresses Marian's positive anticipations of Count Fosco; having just wondered whether she will like him, and before she has the chance to wonder any further along these lines, she must exert her will over what is written, for '[m]y pen is running away into mere speculation. Let me return to sober matter of fact' (p.193). Rosanna Spearman also expresses a similar notion in her post-mortem letter to Franklin Blake when she talks of her unrequited love, which she excuses as 'this wandering of my pen' (M, p.364). It is clear, therefore, that the extent to which a female character is demonised from a male narrative perspective corresponds to the extent of her independence and subversiveness; this in turn is presented by Collins as being directly related to her activity of writing, and the freedom that this signifies.

Even within this theme, tensions between the two levels of narrative structure are sustained. The introspective "creative" writing is countered by what is portrayed in these texts as a masculine ability to deal with legal matters. When applied to a female character, however, this ability becomes a demonic tendency suggestive of shape-changing. It is accordingly the manly Marian who undertakes to write letters on Laura's

behalf to her lawyer, whereupon her pen once again proves to be a weapon in her hand. She writes to both Gilmore and Kyrle in Laura's interests, expressing the latter's wishes and outlining her predicament. Being now necessarily a secret activity, Marian is however given away by her heavy-handedness in carrying out this "male" form of writing, through the loud scratching of her quill pen. In addressing both Kyrle and Mr. Fairlie on paper, Marian alters her style to best appeal to each character on his own terms – stating solid fact and nothing more speculative to the lawyer, and threatening further disturbance to the ultra-sensitive Mr. Fairlie should he refuse to cooperate.

Lydia Gwilt's powers of composition are very similar to Marian's, although as a villain's they are put to a different use. She too can manipulate her written style to suit the person being addressed; just as Marian's letters to Kyrle and Mr. Fairlie appeal to the dominant characteristic of both, Lydia, to make her claims believable, writes to Major Milroy in the character of a servant, exposing his daughter's relationship with Allan.

'There!' said Miss Gwilt, as she folded the letter up. 'If I had been a professed novelist, I could hardly have written more naturally in the character of a servant than that!' [...]; [she] looked admiringly for the last time at the coarse and clumsy writing which her own delicate hand had produced. (A, p.451)

The artistry with which this blotted, clumsy note is penned, and the contrast of such unwomanly activity with the 'delicate hand' of the "angel", is emphasised through comparison with Miss Milroy's letter to Allan, as interpreted by Lydia:

It was outrageously long and rambling and confused – in short, the letter of a fool. I had to wade through plenty of vulgar sentiment and lamentation, and to

lose time and patience over maudlin outbursts of affection, and nauseous kisses
enclosed in circles of ink. (p.484)

Lydia is thus placed in the role of author, editor and critic – the 'professed novelist' whose immediate creative efforts are duly rewarded, the editor who must 'wade' through unnecessary script, and the harsh critic of heightened sentimentality. These two letters in addition constitute a more extreme reworking of Marian and Laura's powers of expression, here also set against each other. Although for today's reader, Lydia's character is a somewhat sympathetic one, contemporary reactions showed that the predominant impression was one of demon-woman, a reading aided by the character's brilliant red hair and its associations to devilry as well as to sexuality. Her scripting skills thus become part of this representation. Moi observes that '[t]he monster woman is the woman who refuses to be selfless, acts on her own initiative, who *has* a story to tell – in short, a woman who rejects the submissive role patriarchy has reserved for her';¹⁴⁵ this subversiveness is here also directly associated with writing by Moi.¹⁴⁶

The central female identity's need to liberate some part of herself by granting it expression is channelled into the act of writing, which often provides her only relief. Lydia Gwilt, for instance, claims that '[m]y misery is a woman's misery, and it *will* speak – here, rather than nowhere; to my second self, in this book, if I have no one else to hear me' (A, p.532). The private journal thus assumes the role of friend and sympathiser, as well as being an intrinsic part of the central female character's identity – her 'second self', the external receptor of internal feelings that must be expressed. This form of expression records a development of self-knowledge, of a recognition of her Self and integration of

¹⁴⁵ Moi, p.58.

¹⁴⁶ Virginia Woolf also recognises the relatedness of this epithet to the writing woman when, in *A Room of One's Own*, she remarks that an Elizabethan lady might perhaps 'take advantage of her comparative

this into her psyche. As such, writing becomes a clear agent of narrative 'ascent' for the constrained female, a writing out of her own true identity, and a casting off of the image imposed upon her.

Gilbert and Gubar, in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, give examples of "demon" women and their relationship to magical powers – 'the Sphinx, Medusa, Circe, Kali, Delilah, and Salome, all of whom possess duplicitous arts that allow them both to seduce and to steal male generative energy'.¹⁴⁷ Exploiting contemporary values, and the view of the primary narrative, it is noteworthy in this respect that the two female characters who most directly employ writing as a weapon of power as well as a channel for personal expression – Marian and Lydia – are sexually non-generative. The transfer of natural powers into ones deemed socially *unnatural* is suggested here. In the cases of women who are finally paired in marital union, procreation is however still referred to in terms of *artistic creativity*. In *The Moonstone*, for example, Betteredge, speaking of Franklin and Rachel's decoration of her bedroom door, observes that 'we naturally speculated on the chance of their putting their heads together with other objects in view besides the ornamenting of a door' (p.57). Female creative energy is thus developed through Betteredge's remark into a potentially procreative force which may yet result in a more 'natural' conclusion. Such a parallel is also seen when Rosamond Treverton asks her blind husband to kiss their child and 'see which it is – a bust of a baby by a sculptor, or a living cherub by your wife!' (*DS*, p.250).

Marian and Lydia's compositional powers, on the other hand, are shown to essentially replace their ability to give life, for their creativity has been harnessed into

freedom to publish something with her name to it and risk being thought a monster' (p.87).

¹⁴⁷ *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1979), p.34. Gilbert and Gubar also note early on that, while the author is, in western culture, generally 'an aesthetic patriarch whose pen is an instrument of generative power' (p.6), women have assumed the role of literary "eunuchs".

writing produced in an enclosed womb-like room. Because of the frequency of the convention of escape, we may sometimes feel that there is something illusory about the dungeon or whatever: however dark and thick-walled, it seems bound to turn into a *womb of rebirth* sooner or later.¹⁴⁸ Such implicit connotations of procreativity (here this is interpreted as writing) in reference to narrative 'ascent' are suggested in *Armada*, where, as the married Midwinter and Lydia grow apart, both seek and find refuge in writing, in what is an affirmation of the sterility of their marriage. Male writing, as in *The Woman in White*, becomes an enemy here, for '[d]ay after day, the hours that [Midwinter] gives to his hateful writing grow longer and longer; day after day, he becomes more and more silent, in the hours that he gives to Me' (pp.532-33) Even when communication does occur, '[t]he very sound of his voice told me that all his interest was centred in the pen that he had just laid down' (p.534). This displacement bears relation to Heller's argument that, in *Basil*, the narrator's pen is presented metaphorically as a phallic symbol; here, this would apply to the re-channeling of procreative power into writing, as well as to Midwinter's impotence in Lydia's presence.

There is in addition a clear relationship between the sexually non-generative female and the notion of mutated femininity, upholding Collins' wilful representation of these women from an angle reflecting social moral judgement, in contrast to that which reveals the truth. In *The Improper Feminine*, Pykett refers to some reputable figures in their field – Maudsley, Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis – all of whom upheld the theory that there were intermediate stages between being either completely male or completely female.¹⁴⁹ Although Pykett was referring to the literature of the late nineteenth-century, these ideas also indisputably form part of the thinking behind Collins' exploration of

¹⁴⁸ Frye, p.134, my italics.

¹⁴⁹ Pykett, 1992, p.14.

gender identity. The most prominent example of the "man-woman" is of course seen in the physical make-up of Marian Halcombe, yet by creating such a physically "feminine" yet also enterprising villain in Lydia Gwilt, Collins calls into question the entire system whereby sexuality is categorised.

The clinical perspective of gender, anticipating the concerns of the New Woman fiction, thus plays an important role in its representation of "creative" women. Referring to that fiction, Pykett explains that '[t]he rigour of such an education [as men's] was deemed to be incompatible with the rigours of the menstrual cycle, and would use up the energy which should properly be conserved for reproduction'.¹⁵⁰ The applicability of this statement to Collins' work highlights the similarity between the ideas in his writing as outlined above and those that later became prominent aspects of New Woman literature, for the tension between women's work and women's reproductive life was to become a central issue for these writers. Here, this concern is prefigured in the theme of writing woman; this is succinctly expressed by Rachel Verinder when she asks, '[i]s there a form of hysterics that bursts into words instead of tears?' (*M*, p.262). It is thus *hysteria* – that which, in other words, is construed as specifically female – that is rechannelled by those "de-feminised" women into creative 'words'. The relationship between confinement, creativity and sexuality is again emphasised in *No Name*, where Magdalen's talent for acting incites Miss Garth to exclaim, 'I almost wish we were Papists, and had a convent to put [Magdalen] in tomorrow' (p.58). Society's desire to shut away the non-conformative female, here in a prison of celibacy, is more or less realised when Magdalen is confined to her small bedroom at Aldborough, where she is twice described pacing the small space like a wild creature pacing its cage (p.209, 222).

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p.14.

A further suggestion of the close link between creative writing and procreation is made when chemistry – already established as a "masculine" symbol by Marian in referring to the feminine and masculine sides of Fosco (WW, p.223) – is spoken of in the following terms by the Count:

when Shakespeare has *conceived* Hamlet, and sits down to execute the *conception* – with a few grains of powder dropped into his daily food, I will reduce his mind, by the action of his body, till his pen pours out the most abject drivel that has ever degraded paper. (p.617, my italics)

The imaginary dimension, already associated with female creativity, is thus laid open to the control of the "chemist", here Fosco (in a similar vein, Colonel Herncastle plans to have the female symbol of the moonstone cut up, and its proceeds left for a professorship of chemistry). This indeed anticipates the drugging of Laura's maid, the administration of medicines to Anne Catherick, and the fear that Fosco will poison Marian.

Although Collins does not permit Marian to be reduced by 'a few grains of powder', choosing a fever as the cause of her illness instead, it is perhaps no coincidence that her physical and mental deterioration is signalled by the deterioration of her ability to write, and with it, the demise of female creativity and the simultaneous denial of freedom. It is a fact ignored by critics, yet one that is important in this context, that the loss of Marian's ability to write takes place in the period *preceding* both her illness and her exit onto the rooftop.

For ten minutes or more, I sat idle, with the pen in my hand, thinking over the events of the last twelve hours. When I at last addressed myself to my task, I

found a difficulty in proceeding with it which I had never experienced before. In spite of my efforts to fix my thoughts on the matter in hand, they wandered away, with the strangest persistency, in the one direction of Sir Percival and the Count; and all the interest which I tried to concentrate on my journal, centred instead, in that private interview between them, which had been put off all through the day, and which was now to take place in the silence and solitude of the night. (p.322)

The author emphasises that this incapacity is a purely psychological one and therefore one that might probably have occurred anyway. As well as anticipating the fever that will break down her physical strength, it is also a reminder of Fosco's boast of his power to 'reduce the mind' in order to inhibit the process of creative writing. This is made clear when the housekeeper, finding her the following morning, observes that she was 'walking about her room with a pen in her hand, quite light-headed' (p.365). Following her narrative 'ascent' through the mental freedom experienced by writing, therefore, Marian is returned to the underworld of helplessness, where her life is wholly dependent on the two male villains.

As far as the present argument is concerned, however, the significance of Marian's inability to write preceding her illness lies chiefly in the similarity between this and the impossibility of reading or sketching experienced by Hartright following his initial meeting with the woman in white, when he too finds his thoughts wandering. It is important, too, that this paragraph marks the end of one episode of Hartright's life, as it does for Marian. The implication, then, is that at that point Hartright's powers had in some way been appropriated by Marian; they are accordingly now only to be recovered by reducing her to the status of one who can be controlled. Thus, as Hartright leaves

Central America '[e]arly in the summer of 1850' (p.414), Marian's diary comes to an abrupt end on June 20th of that year. Walter's resumption of power is enacted in this instance through Fosco, whose violation of Marian's diary is equated by many critics to a literal and symbolic rape. Similarly, in *Armada*, Allan's newly-found stability, this time at Lydia's expense, manifests itself through his penmanship. Brief, curt, and offensively blunt letters are miraculously transformed into lengthy descriptive prose following his shipwreck: 'I seem to have lost my old knack at putting things short, and finishing on the first page' (p.592), he writes to Bashwood. The relationship between the male protagonist's writing and the assertion of patriarchal authority is also clear in *Basil*, when that character's identity and position within the system are literally torn out of the family history as the page securing him as the bearer of the familial name is removed by his father. It is consequently clear that the withdrawal of the female's 'ascent', and her reinstatement in the narrative underworld, coincides with the hero's 'ascent'. The supposition that 'ascent' forms the conclusion of the narrative therefore refers only to what the present study has termed the primary narrative level, that is to say that which operates through the hero. The subversive female's narrative progression, conversely, returns to a state of 'descent', as has been seen, *as a direct result of the hero's 'ascent'*. This latter, indeed, is only able to take place when the female character in question has been effectively contained. The two stages are therefore shown to be interdependent.

The reassertion of male writing in *The Woman in White* is heralded when Marian's illegible scratchings trail off and are replaced by 'a man's handwriting, large, bold, and firmly regular' (p.343). The reading of her journal does not in fact serve the plot-line in any other way than as a symbolic reversal of both perspective and power in the text. While her accurate memory and descriptive powers are praised, the very act of appraisal denigrates the writing, placing Fosco in the position of its editor and judge; as

he now pens his 'paternal lines', the diary is reduced through the reference to a childish achievement and pastime (p.344). Accordingly, the only writing that Marian produces after this point in the narrative is described as 'blotted' and 'hurriedly-written' by Walter (p.554). The three narratives immediately following Marian's – Mr. Fairlie's, the housekeeper's, and Hester Pinhorn's – confirm the cessation of the dominant female voice, for all three disclaim their powers of memory, one of Marian's greatest assets, and a lack heretofore associated with Laura's frailty. Each, furthermore, embodies a quality which has been used to typify "feminine" incapacity: the feminised Mr. Fairlie claims to lack the physical strength to write, the housekeeper is referred to by her social position and role alone, and the last of these is entirely illiterate, and must mark her identity with a cross.

That the turning around of the narrative at this point is one based on gender, as exemplified through writing, is highlighted through the all-but-actual death of the feminised Laura. Her poor memory now entirely deserts her as she is rendered 'socially, morally, legally – dead' (p.421). Conversely, the central position of the female identity in the narrative is displaced from several directions: the Brotherhood which only comes to the fore in the second half of the novel as a symbol of patriarchal solidarity; the letter left by Walter with Pesca as a safeguard to his life; the reply to this; and the meticulous construction of Fosco's narrative. All of these contribute to the momentum that gathers to re-establish logic as dominant over imagination, and Legal over Emotional. Marian's night-time absorption in her writing as an emotional outlet is thus subsumed by the growing prominence of writing in a formal and legal context. This will culminate, of course, in the various pieces of writing that Hartright gathers as proof of Laura's real identity. Thus Anne Catherick's death certificate, Percival Glyde's letter, the coachman's register, Fosco's narrative, and indeed the inscription on the tombstone all contrive to

affirm the social and institutional strength of the male word, and its renewed supremacy over female life and identity. This affirms the shift in focus as well as in power that has taken place, as the hero's 'ascent' is accompanied, and indeed requires, the devaluation of its counterpart.

At this stage of the subversive female's 'descent', a new relationship comes into play between creative writing and physicality. In an overt uniting of the two, Collins invokes an astounding description of the *physical* exertions of writing in the production of Fosco's narrative. Although too lengthy to quote in full, the verbs used in this description clearly illustrate Fosco's theatrical exhilaration in the activity: *marching* around the room, *striking* his forehead, *thumping* his hand on the desk, *tossing* paper over his shoulder, *pouncing* on more paper, *smacking* his forehead, *springing* to his feet, and *thumping* his chest (pp.608-9). The fervid writing, organising, revising and stringing are all vividly described, in an act which Fosco seizes as 'the pedestal on which his vanity mounted for the one cherished purpose of self-display' (p.608). The reassertion of male dominance over the female characters' fate, as symbolised here by the exaggerated emphasis on physicality as opposed to the imagination, is supported by the physical wasting of certain female characters. Yet while illness is one way of achieving this, and transforms both Marian and Laura from their former selves, the death of several of Collins' female characters is also relevant in this respect, for it highlights the relationship between text and body, as well as between identity and writing. While faces and emotions are often said to be read, the annihilation of the body is paralleled by the violation and devaluation of the written text. This is seen both in *The Dead Secret*, where the writer's death corresponds with the "burial" of her letter in the Myrtle Room, and, even more explicitly, in *The Moonstone*, where Rosanna Spearman's letter is buried at

the exact spot where she later commits suicide. The manipulation of the written text is thus an accurate signifier of the destruction of the Self made whole through writing.

The literal incarceration of women within a room in which mental creativity can take place is exaggerated in *The Moonstone*, when Rosanna's letter, 'closely written' (*M*, p.347), a voice from the dead, is enchained in a box which, like her body, is further concealed beneath quicksand. The literal suffocation of her expression, knowledge and life is thus transmuted onto the "body" of the text itself. The parallels between living body and written word are further highlighted when Franklin Blake, on the point of recovering the box, suddenly experiences 'an unutterable dread of seeing her rise through the heaving surface of the sand' (p.343). Again, in *The Dead Secret*, Sarah Leeson shudders with a feeling of physical pain as she touches her mistress' confessional letter (p.23). For both Rosanna and Sarah, the letters act, or at least are intended to act, as a memorial of their lives, literally buried and to be exhumed only after death.

Like Marian, Lydia, or Rosanna, Ezra Jennings, a character throughout the narrative associated with the female characters, also finds relief in writing, in this case a book which, appropriately, will be neither completed nor published. His constructive interpretation of the doctor's broken narrative is moreover described by Franklin Blake in terms of an acceptable feminine activity – 'the ingenuity which had *woven* this smooth and finished texture out of the ravelled skein' (*M*, p.430, my italics). Again, just as the women acknowledge the almost spouse-like dimensions which their private diaries have assumed, Jennings too alleges that his writing has 'been the friend of many lonely hours' (p.341), and, in a parallel with Rosanna, also wishes it to be buried with him.

The locations where such burials take place – the Shivering Sands, Blackwater Lake, and the Gothic wing of an old mansion in *The Dead Secret* – themselves indicate the subversive nature of the writers of these texts, who must venture beyond the

boundaries of the acceptable in order to fulfil a need for some form of freedom. The theme of buried letters is thus clearly representative of 'social and textual marginality'.¹⁵¹ The imagery of the body/text's destruction is envisaged in *The Woman in White* when Anne Catherick buries a letter to Laura, writing 'LOOK' on the sand above. This, however, is first unearthed and read by Percival, who re-writes the word on that spot, and carries out a violation which not only characterises his treatment of Anne herself, but also parallels Fosco's violation of Marian's diary. The destruction of Anne's mark on the sand is itself a reenactment of Laura's on the beach at Limmeridge: 'where was the place on which she had once drawn idle figures with her parasol on the sand; [...] ? Wind and wave had long since smoothed out *the trace of her which she had left* in those marks' (pp.117-18, my italics). The annihilation of these "traces of themselves" are in effect realised with the effacement of Laura and Anne's memories, as well as their bodily identities. This idea is indeed repeated by Rosanna Spearman, who, while 'making images with her finger in the sand' (*M*, p.27), talks of the grave that awaits her beneath the quicksand, where she, like her writing, will also be removed from existence. The text's 'descent' in this sense, where it is buried or concealed, thus reflects its writer's 'descent', be it physical death, or one of the inner Self's freedom. While appearing to conform to the requirements of the primary narrative structure, Collins, by equating the written text with the physical body of its writer, is making a more subtle comment relating to the secondary narrative level, and the impossibility of permanent freedom for the female identity.

The physical annihilation of subversive female or "feminine" characters, with the exception of Marian (although one may convincingly argue that, following her illness, the Marian of Limmeridge is indeed dead), gives way to the physical *possession* of a

¹⁵¹ Heller, p.1.

female character by the male protagonist as the narrative focus is reversed. This is carried out by manipulating the symbol of hands in the text. Collins' subtle use of "hands" in his novels generally is significant in defining various characters' personalities as well as their powers of expression: the illegitimate Rosamond Treverton's writing is inherently not that of a lady (*DS*, p.174), even though she has been raised as one, and instantly reveals the secret of her identity, whereas Sarah Leeson's declining health is ascertained by her uncle through her writing. In *The Woman in White*, this is, unsurprisingly, even more prevalent: Mr. Fairlie's violet-coloured ink and 'white delicate hands' typify his foppery (p.39), while Mrs. Catherick's hypocrisy is proclaimed in her avowal that '[m]y pen is the pen of a member of the rector's congregation, and a subscriber to the "Wednesday Lectures on Justification by Faith" – how can you expect me to employ it in writing bad language?' (p.550). Fosco's writing is, like his powers of expression, large and bold, while his signature (an 'F' surrounded by intricate flourishes), and the coronet above this on his gilt card, all point to his high self-esteem and flamboyance, while also expressing the artistic side of his nature. Similarly, Sir Percival's scarred hand suggests the stigma of illegitimacy, a mark that will be branded on his entire body when this is finally removed from the church, burnt and blackened. The close tie created in the narrative between the physical hand and the written "hand" is again suggested when Sir Percival is killed in the very act of attempting to alter his writing and eliminate the proof of his illegitimacy.

This perspective of writing also comes significantly into play in the descriptions of the central female characters' script. Anne's is appropriately a "small hand" in its frailty as well as technically, while Laura's must be guided by Hartright's; Marian's hands are tellingly 'as awkward as a man's' (p.233). A parallel is made between the two women in white by using this symbol very early on in the book. Anne's writing is described as

'traced on ruled lines, in the cramped, conventional, copybook character, technically termed 'small hand'. It was feeble and faint, and defaced by blots, but had otherwise nothing to distinguish it' (p.80). The use of 'cramped', and the set 'ruled lines' imply both the physical and psychological restriction of which she has been the victim, while the 'copybook character' likens her to a child. Her letter to Laura warning her against her forthcoming marriage immediately sets a judgement upon this unfortunate woman; it begins and ends without the formality of address and signature, is obviously the letter of a woman, and also, apparently, suggests a deranged mind. Laura's 'poor, faint, valueless sketches' similarly constitute the equivalent of writing here (p.490). Her letter to Mrs. Vesey is also, like Anne's, without date or day of the week – a few basic lines which also fit neither the category of illiterate or refined; '[w]hat help was there in those lines? None', judges Walter (p.445). The fact that both women dress predominantly in white is also significant in this sense for, as Heller observes, 'Anne Catherick, the woman in white, embodies the social insensibility that renders women blank pages to be inscribed by men'.¹⁵² This is literally envisioned when Laura, imprisoned in the asylum, is shown Anne's name written on each item of what are now her own white clothes, indelible 'in good marking-ink' (p.436). Since the narrator of *No Name* also argues against the general philosophy that babies are born with 'dispositions like blank sheets of paper' (p.146), the implications of unworldliness and malleability are clear in this image, which is equally relevant to Clara in *Basil* and to Lucilla Finch, both of whom are also robed in white. An additional aspect to this idea is introduced in *The Moonstone*, where whiteness is related to death. Whereas Rosanna's past life has been 'sponged out' (p.26), she also intends to remove a stain on Betteredge's shirt – a stain already used as a metaphor for her life in this scene. The wiping away of life and emotion thus reflect the death of the Self which

¹⁵² Ibid, p.112.

the "angelic" women in white undergo in their passivity. Through this theme, it is clear that they, unlike the female characters who find freedom through writing in private, never achieve 'ascent'. This, indeed, is merely a confirmation of the fact that, in describing their passive natures, Collins has related them strictly to the primary narrative.

A special emphasis is laid throughout *The Woman in White* on Laura's inability to make her mark in writing. The letters she writes to Marian whilst on her honeymoon contain nothing worthy of being quoted, and presage the loss of identity which is to come, for '[i]t is always Laura Fairlie who has been writing to me [...] and never Lady Glyde' (p.203), as Marian observes. The only instance in which we see Laura with pen in hand is on the occasion where she is required to sign her name – one she will soon be dispossessed of – to a legal document: 'Percival dipped a pen in ink, and handed it to his wife' (p.247). Although Collins creates the justification of ignorance as to what she is signing, the image of Laura standing helpless, pen in hand and unable to sign her name, is one that is repeated.¹⁵³ Before long, appropriately, she will be unable to prove her identity in this way, for when Hartright considers putting her through a handwriting test to prove that she is who she claims, he decides that this would be insufficient evidence against the formal testimonies of the death certificate and the inscription on the tombstone. "Male" writing thus not only opposes but in addition becomes a signifier of death, either literally or metaphorically, for the female characters in this respect.

The male violation of the transgressive female's written "hand" is echoed by the literal control which a central male character exerts over the physical hand of the docile female. This appropriation of power finds its final and ultimate form in the marriages

¹⁵³ The Gothic heritage relied on by Collins may extend to a more specific influence in this episode, which may be read as a parallel of a scene in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in which the villainous Montoni, together with his ally Orsino, attempts to obtain Emily St. Aubert's signature, and through it, her inheritance. In this matter of 'business', Montoni 'offered her a pen. She took it, and was going to write – when the design of Montoni came upon her like a flash of lightning; she trembled, let the pen fall, and refused to sign what she

that so often take place at the texts' conclusions. Thus, in *The Moonstone*, Gabriel Betteredge describes how Franklin Blake 'put an apron and a bib over Miss Rachel's gown, and set her to work [...] [he] scraped off all the nice varnish with pumice-stone, and made what he described as a surface to work on. Miss Rachel then covered the surface, *under his directions and with his help*, with patterns and devices' (p.56, my italics). Similarly, in *The Woman in White*, Percival's attempts to exert his power over Laura's hand, literally giving her the ready pen, fails only through Fosco's intervention against more violent methods. This, however, will be taken up by Hartright: now that she is entirely enfeebled, Walter '[sits] by [Laura's] side, to guide the faltering touch, to help the feeble hand' (p.443). Significantly, while the sexually non-generative females write prodigiously in the secrecy of their chambers, the docile women's creative expression is controlled and channelled into procreativity by the patriarch's appropriation of their *hands* in marriage. Walter Hartright's statement that 'I was only the teacher who guided her hand – I ask for it, in her adversity, as the hand of my wife!' thus ensures that his possession of Laura is complete (p.575). While the subversive female identity is allowed a degree of liberty through fantasy and creative expression by writing in her private journal, this is subsequently revoked and undercut by the violation of this space. The present section has shown that writing, while not recognised as an important theme by Collins critics, and not selected as a theme of 'ascent' in *The Secular Scripture*, is indeed vital in both respects. While relating more directly to the subversive female, it is relevant to both the primary and the secondary narrative progressions: it enables a form of liberation – and hence 'ascent' – for the imprisoned female, while the subsequent failure of this charts the hero's 'ascent' as the writing woman is returned to her underworld. The theme marks, nevertheless, the temporary independence of the two courses as the female

identity immerses itself in a subjective world, although the detachedness this involves – and the non-procreativity related to it – has meant that she has been demonised.

ii. Masquerade

The theme of writing in the novels mentioned above has been shown to function as a clear agent of secondary narrative 'ascent', despite the ultimate downfall of the central female protagonists involved in this process. Although writing is not recognised by Frye as such, the theme of masquerade is indeed mentioned as an important means whereby romance narrative balance is re-established.

We remember that a central image of descent was that of being involved with pictures or tapestries or statues or mirrors in a way that suggested the exchange of original identity for its shadow or reflection. On the opposite side we have statues coming to life, [...] we have stories of snow maidens thawed out and sleeping beauties awakened. [...] One very significant image of this type is the conclusion of a masque, where [...] the actors comes out of their dramatic frame and revert to the people they actually are.¹⁵⁴

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Collins' concern with social hypocrisy and the extent to which this was practiced in everyday Victorian life clearly shapes narrative events, yet is also manifest in a heightened emphasis on sight and seeing in his work. Vision is represented as a sense easily capable of being deceived, or manipulating the truth, and as such is more obviously relevant to the concept of the double than writing. Both themes, in their relation to identity, however, function in parallel ways in this respect. The present study

¹⁵⁴ Frye, p.155.

will show that, while writing operates on a secondary narrative level to refer to the subversive female identity, the theme of disguise is viewed from a primary narrative perspective, and bears directly on the hero's progression. This is clarified when one considers that the detective theme itself is driven by the need to break down barriers in order to eliminate misconception and reveal objective truth.

Before commencing to examine the implications of the theme of masquerade in Collins' work, it is relevant to establish the author's own sentiments in relation to external appearance, and consequently the manner in which this is translated into his fiction. In a piece for *All The Year Round*, he relates a story describing his evasion of an evening party due to the extreme heat and the social dictates regarding apparel. Ridiculing the social regimen that places the demands of etiquette before the body's natural requirements, and infringes on the individual's existence, Collins goes on to tell how, dressed in paletot, straw hat and slippers, he sets off to gaze on that very same dinner-party:

There is a fourth place [...] My place, beyond a doubt. Horrible thought! I see my own ghost sitting there: the appearance of that perspiring spectre is too dreadful to be described. I shudder in my convenient front place against the area railings, as I survey my own full-dressed Fetch at the dinner-table – I turn away my face in terror, and look for comfort at my street-companions, my worthy fellow outcasts, watching with me on either side.¹⁵⁵

Whether the tale is true or not is unimportant, for Collins was clearly capable of such action. While appearance is shown to create a *social* schism – for the writer's

¹⁵⁵ 'New View of Society', Volume I, August 1859, p.397.

identification with the mob on this occasion is emphasised – Collins places the focus upon the oppression of the Self through conformism in this manner. The Self's true identity, he suggests, is quite separate from the dressed-up figure viewed by the public eye, and it is apparel that in this case becomes the distorter of identity. The theatrical analogy of this episode – the crowd of onlookers gazing through the windows of a mansion at a brightly-lit scene of activity – suggests the artificiality of such convention, and expresses Collins' recognition of the need to break free of it and function beyond its boundaries; it is only in this way that the individual, he suggests, can *be* him or herself. Accordingly, the requisite costume for such an occasion is described in terms of imprisonment:

The prison of black broadcloth in which my hospitable friends required me to shut myself up – there were the coat, waistcoat, and trousers, the hideous habilimentary instruments of torture which Society actually expected me to put on in the scorching hot condition of the London atmosphere.¹⁵⁶

That the issue of social restriction by appearance should affect women of the period in a more profound way is also clear. Collins in fact often voiced his opposition to such absurd rules, encouraging his friend Nina Lehmann to '[p]urchase becoming (and warm) things for the neck and chest. Rise superior to the devilish delusion which makes women think that their feet cannot possibly look pretty in thick boots. I have studied the subject, and I think they *can*'.¹⁵⁷ The distortion of the natural human form that women's clothing, and more specifically corsets, effected, is likewise attacked, and the writer makes a point of expressing his admiration for the natural and undeformed waists of his

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p.396.

fictional heroines, making this a strong feature of their physical attractiveness. Women's clothing is accordingly rendered a mark of their social restriction, and allies Collins with the Pre-Raphaelites, in whose paintings women were frequently portrayed wearing loose garments.

Drawing on such convictions, Collins uses contemporary ideology to portray the fictional restriction of his characters. By doing so, he exhibits further concern with identity, relating this here to the pressure to conform to social standards, and the infringement of such values upon the Self. In addition, this theme anticipates a return to the order of the primary narrative, as the hero reconstructs characters' identities into a socially acceptable form. Accordingly, this idea is frequently accompanied by 'pictures or tapestries or statues or mirrors'. Given Collins' close connection with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, as well as the influence of his artist father, references to painting are predominant in this context. Unsurprisingly, they are applied largely to the heroine of the primary narrative – that is to say, the conventional heroine. Thus Laura Fairlie appears, like the Pre-Raphaelite Madonna, in blue and white in the drawing-master Hartright's 'portrait of her', and is thereafter imaged by him standing in the summer-house, as in a picture (WW, p.49). Lucilla Finch too is likened to Raphael's Madonna di San Sisto (PMF, p.13), while Gabriel Betteredge, the central narrative voice of *The Moonstone*, ends his description of Rachel with 'there behold my portrait of her, to the best of my painting, as large as life!' (p.58). The theme is clearly adapted to incorporate the male construction of female identity. This is even more overt in some of the short stories: 'The Lady of Glenwith Grange', 'The Yellow Mask', 'Sister Rose', and 'The Lawyer's Story of a Stolen Letter' are all tales related to an artist by his sitters as he paints. Like the male narrative framework of *The Woman in White* or *The Moonstone*, this also channels the

¹⁵⁷ Letter of 26.10.1866, quoted by Peters, Catherine, p.47.

text through the male consciousness, here paralleling portraiture with the constructed identity within the narrative itself. In the same vein, paintings, sketches and other works of art appear in vast numbers in Mr Fairlie's room, while family portraits and a leaden statue of a monster are to be found in Blackwater Park.

The inclusion of mirrors in the narratives is also instrumental not only in highlighting the deceptions that are taking place within the plot, but also suggests a more serious fragmentation of identity. In *The New Magdalen*, the disguised Mercy Merrick pauses before a mirror, and '[a] momentary smile, the most weary, the most hopeless that ever saddened a woman's face, appeared *in the reflection* which the mirror gave her back.'¹⁵⁸ Lydia Gwilt, whose external appearance belies her falseness, is portrayed addressing her own reflection as if it were another person: 'You strange creature!' she murmured, leaning her elbows on the mantel-piece, and languidly addressing the reflection of herself in the glass. 'Have you got any conscience left? And has [Midwinter] roused it?' (A, p.377). In *No Name*, social and personal identity are likewise divorced in this way, as Magdalen sits lost in thought before a mirror. Paul Coates questions whether, in literature of the double at the end of the nineteenth century, 'woman is so often represented as seated in front of a mirror because she seeks thereby to come to terms with the disparity between her mental self-image, an imaginary form contaminated by the prevailing male images of the patriarchal culture, and the actual fact of her difference'.¹⁵⁹ This is certainly true here, where the dissociation from the reflected image reveals the author's denial of a fluid, constant and nuclear identity in many of his female characters, and suggests the need for its reintegration.

¹⁵⁸ (London: Chatto & Windus, 1887), p.261, my italics. All quotations from *The New Magdalen* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

¹⁵⁹ Coates, p.4.

The divided Self, as well as the numerous doubles in Collins' fiction, assumes a central part in the narrative during this stage of secondary 'descent'. More generally, however, the reader's perspective of narrative truth is constantly called into question by the author, exposing an unstable world where integration and objective reality remain elusive. In this manner, Collins undermines the validity of primary narrative values, challenging the established order. This is shown to be the case in *The New Magdalen*, where the reader's reliance on narrative perspective is stressed. The room in which most of the story is played out consequently presents, '[t]o the educated eye, [...] a startling, almost a revolutionary mixture of the decorative workmanship of widely-differing schools. To the ignorant eye, the one result produced is an impression of perfect luxury and comfort' (pp.57-58). Following on from this, the accuracy of Collins' first person narratives is thus automatically called into question, and the reader is purposely encouraged to put aside any preconceptions relating to appearance, for this is exposed as untrustworthy. The extent to which appearance is relied on, and judgements based upon it, are expressed by Andrew Treverton in *The Dead Secret*, who, through contempt for society, chooses to remain isolated from both it and its values, for

humanity is always against any individual member of the species who presumes to differ from the rest [...] Let him walk at noonday with perfect composure of countenance and decency of gait, with not the slightest appearance of vacancy in his eyes or wildness in his manner [...] without a hat, and let every one of the thousands of hat-wearing people whom he passes be asked separately what they think of him, how many will abstain from deciding instantly that he is mad, on no other evidence than the evidence of his bare head? (p.80)

Likewise, '[i]n the year eighteen hundred and forty-four the fact of a man's not shaving was regarded by the enlightened majority of the English nation as a proof of unsoundness of intellect' (p.83).

Such ideas inform the themes of masquerade and disguise, whereby appearance and truth are frequently manipulated; false or mistaken identity is thus a main theme in the novels. Indeed, Collins implies that, so accustomed is the eye to the false disguises dictated by social etiquette, that the truth itself is often dismissed as a lie. The disharmony between Sarah Leeson's young face and her grey hair thus invokes the remark that dying it would result in a more 'real' effect: 'Art would have seemed to be the truth, because Nature looked like falsehood' (*DS*, p.12). The theme of masking becomes more overt elsewhere. It constitutes, for example, the central idea in the short story 'The Yellow Mask', where a dead woman is impersonated by the use of a wax mask of her face. This device assumes a symbolic meaning in the novels, where it invariably signifies the suppression of a character's emotion, or of truth. In *The New Magdalen*, a French surgeon's face expresses admiration for the injured Grace Roseberry, but once she is believed to be dead, 'its professional composure covered it like a mask' (*NM*, p.27). Likewise, Lady Janet's affection for Mercy Merrick is plain to see as she handles a photograph of her protégé, yet '[t]he next moment Lady Janet's mask was on. Any superficial onlooker who had seen her now would have said, '[t]here is a hard woman!' ' (p.279). The elderly Mr. Ablewhite's face in *The Moonstone* is also described as being covered in a varnish resistant to even the most extreme aggravation. His true feelings, however, are divined by Miss Clack to lie exposed in the changing colour of the top of his bald head.

The concept of true identity concealed beneath a mask, by implication a death of the Self, is presented more literally in *The Moonstone*, where the cruel physical alteration

caused by Dr. Candy's illness is exacerbated rather than relieved by his outfit. Meeting him for the first time after his illness, Franklin Blake remarks that

I saw nothing in him of his former self, but the old tendency to vulgar smartness in his dress. The man was a wreck; but his clothes and his jewellery – in cruel mockery of the change in him – were as gay and as gaudy as ever. (p.404)

A similar situation is presented in *Armadale*, when the lovelorn Bashwood attempts to conceal his age in the hope of attracting Lydia. His black suit is consequently replaced by a grey riding coat, white waistcoat, blue satin cravat and large-checked summer trousers, while his scented and oiled wig is carefully arranged to conceal his wrinkles.

He was an object to laugh at – he was an object to weep over. His enemies [...] would have forgiven him, on seeing him in his new dress. His friends [...] would have been less distressed if they had looked at him in his coffin, than if they had looked at him as he was now. (p.505)

The idea of masking has thus more overtly transmuted into an expression of decay and the grotesque (a theme central, for example, in Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*). It is the expression of a movement into a state of imprisonment within social strictures, making the division of identity implicit within this theme. It is only through having created and charted a progression on a secondary narrative level that Collins is now able to expose the fallacy of such values, for they are seen to relate only to a socially-formulated Self, one hollow in its falseness.

Masking and suppression of identity are carried out in a very different way when it comes to the women in white of these narratives, for their costume denies all expression of the Self. As the title implies, this is of primary importance in *The Woman in White*. The prevailing image of the white-robed figure therein bears close ties to Whistler's painting, 'The White Girl – Symphony in White, No.1', which was also known as 'The Woman in White'. The painting was indeed on exhibition in London at the time when the novel had reached the height of its popularity. Although the connotations of youthful innocence that the colour conveys in the book are also present in the painting, John Harvey suggests that this may also be open to other interpretations. Since the model was also Whistler's mistress, he suggests that there may be additional associations of white here with bed-linen and adultery, in an ironic parody of the idealised angelic women of the period.¹⁶⁰

It is no coincidence that, in the novel, the reader's, as well as Hartright's, first and lasting impression of Anne Catherick is of the startling whiteness of her dress, an impression transferred onto Laura in her choice of costume. The unassuming simplicity of Miss Fairlie's white dress is instantly associated by Hartright with poverty, and is deemed inappropriate attire for an heiress. The sense of vacuity it imparts, of blankness waiting to be filled, is indeed an appropriate one for Laura's character, which consistently exhibits the stereotyped qualities of frail and passive Victorian womanhood. The strong association of the white-clad figure with moonlight – at Anne's initial appearance and Laura's moonlight terrace walk – furthermore renders it an essentially feminine colour, one that glows in a supernatural fashion. The woman in white is thus 'ghost, angel, moon-goddess, corpse, bride, mourner, virgin in one', and becomes a hallmark of gender

¹⁶⁰ Harvey, John, *Men in Black* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), p.205.

as well as of the suppression of individuality.¹⁶¹ Whiteness therefore informs the concept of these womens' fragmented identities. Self-perception has been distorted by imposed values, and their sense of self-knowledge and self-identification has either faded or vanished altogether. Laura and Anne Catherick successfully illustrate this clearly, for they are in many ways one and the same, reflected images of each other. Suggestions of insanity are in addition closely coupled with the dispossession of their sense of Self, one that is signified by the theft of their identities. The interchanging of the two women, a point around which the plot centres, consequently underlines the concern not only with external identity, but with the acquisition of inner wholeness. In using the theme of socially-inflicted appearance to effect more clearly the shift away from the inner Self's identity, Collins attacks the foundations of contemporary values, while also designating the women in white as participants in the primary narrative alone, for their identities are all too easily manipulated and effaced by others.

The subversive female characters are conversely shown to acquire liberation through disguise. Collins ensures that they remain in the narrative focus through this visual differentiation, while ascribing them once more with the power to liberate themselves. Secrecy is again indispensable to this process, underlining their rejection of social norms. Magdalen Vanstone's imposture as both an elderly woman and a young orphaned lady of fortune in *No Name* corroborate her feelings of lost identity, while Marian Halcombe's caricatured, unbefitting and manly face expresses her courage and resolution, as the discarding of her voluminous skirts affirms. The close association already remarked upon between such figures and foreign characters in the novels upholds this idea, for the latter too express their real personalities through disguise. Professor Pesca, in gratitude to the country that harbours him, for instance, has done his utmost to

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.206.

transform himself into an Englishman. This has been accomplished not only by assuming the "costume" of the country, but in adopting the relevant habits, pastimes and turns of phrase. The apparent comfort which he feels in this guise, however, and his love-affair with the English culture, imply the assertion of a natural part of his character. Like his fellow countryman, Count Fosco has also re-created himself in this manner. In his case, however, the disguise is more profound, for even his bodily features, such as girth and hair, are ascertained to be a part of the deception. Although appearing to be 'a fat St. Cecilia masquerading in male attire' (WW, p.230), the theatricality of these aspects of his appearance externalizes the dramatic, artistic and flamboyant side of his nature, characteristics evident in, for example, his love of opera and the stage. While the suggestion of masquerade would seem to imply a suppression of true identity in these cases, therefore, it in fact asserts the truth, and expresses these characters' genuine personalities.

The woman dressed in white, as Harvey has observed, is often coupled with a man in black: he gives, among others, two paintings as examples – James Tissot's 'Too Early' [1873] and Manet's 'The Balcony' [1868-9] – adding that 'in general it is apparent, in nineteenth century paintings, that the women in white belong to men in black'.¹⁶² Harvey's statement applies to *The Woman in White*, where our only clear image of a man in black is that of Sir Percival Glyde. Although the colour of his outfit is never specifically declared, he is 'the gentleman in mourning' (p.482), and opposes the whiteness of the two women, both of whom are "possessed" by him in some way. While anticipating his supposed mourning as Laura's husband, Percival's black attire also foretells his own death, whereupon his charred face will also appear 'stark and grim and black' (p.532). On another level, black is also the dress of shabby-genteel poverty for

male characters like Bashwood or Captain Wragge, while also identifying the man in service. The extent to which this is intended to act as a means of denying difference is clear when Sergeant Cuff is said to resemble a parson or an undertaker, while Gilmore, a lawyer, may equally well be a clergyman. Significantly, Cuff's transformation once he retires from service expresses an individual identity so disparate from his previous role that it renders him comical. Franklin Blake sees that

Cuff was changed beyond all recognition. He wore a broad-brimmed white hat, a light shooting jacket, white trousers, and drab gaiters. He carried a stout oak stick. His whole aim and object seemed to be to look as if he had lived in the country all his life. When I complimented him on his Metamorphosis, he declined to take it as a joke. He complained, quite gravely, of the noises and the smells of London. I declare I am far from sure that he did not speak with a slightly rustic accent! I offered him breakfast. The innocent countryman was quite shocked. *His* breakfast hour was half past six – and *he* went to bed with the cocks and hens! (*M*, p.486)

At least some of the associations of women in white may be conferred onto the women who appear dressed in black, controversial figures of darkness and secrecy. Sarah Leeson in *The Dead Secret* is repeatedly noticed by her neat black dress, and in many ways inverts the ideas attributed to whiteness: she is thus a living corpse, a real ghost, thwarted bride, supposed virgin, and secret mourner. The suppression of truth is, however, clearly indicated by her costume. In others, black is the sign of subservience. Countess Fosco's black dresses signify not only her obedience to the Count, but highlight

¹⁶² Ibid, pp.208-9, 210-211.

the extremity of the change that has taken place in her, denying all remembrance of the bright colours she had been used to wear before her marriage. The death of the former Self has here coincided with this event, a theme Collins enlarges upon in the conclusion of this and several others of his novels.

It is no surprise, then, that those women portrayed as independent and strong of character as well as of body are often differentiated visually by their outfits. While her sister is clothed in sober black, the exuberant Magdalen Vanstone makes her appearance in *No Name*, after banging the door and singing and leaping down the stairs, wearing a 'brilliantly-striped morning dress' with 'fluttering ribbons', and 'large scarlet rosettes' on her shoes (p.14), while Marian Halcombe wears yellow, the colour said to best complement her dark colouring. The distinction of the subversive women in this context can clearly be read as a signifier of their challenging attitudes, for the theatricality of both personal and habilimentary appearance insinuates, as this section has argued, a breaking with tradition in the pursuit of Self-expression and a form of liberty. The liberty from social restraint, and with it the symbolic unifying of the fragmented Self, is however achieved through the motif of masquerade in only a limited manner. The freedom that Magdalen experiences whilst acting, or the denial of Marian's gender-role, both qualify as a disengagement with a false, socially-determined identity. This, however, is doomed to failure, and Self-expression does not succeed here in the developed and sustained manner that has been seen to be a result of the theme of writing. Whereas Daphne du Maurier later employs the motif of masquerade in an entirely personal context as a means whereby the female can integrate the disparate facets of her Self and act to appropriate her identity beyond the limits of the patriarchal circle, this is not the case here. Instead, the narrative focus reverts to the primary level, and the thawing maidens, awakening beauties, and reanimated statues that typify 'ascent' are

personified in the conventional heroine, Laura, who regains her lost memory as well as her lost identity. This is made possible by the acquisition of wholeness insofar as her double, Anne, is now dead. This primary narrative 'ascent' is coincidental, however, with the alteration in external appearance of Marian, who is now permanently transformed through illness, and accordingly loses her mannerisms and independent voice, as well as her bright costume.

It has been demonstrated that the theme of disguise, while being vital to Collins' concern with identity, has also played an important part in the narrative structural progression. Like writing, it has constituted a liberation and expression of identity on a secondary narrative level. The realist mode involved has meant, however, that manipulation by the hero and his counterparts has been inevitable. The return to a focus on black and white in relation to all the female characters has thus also signified a return to the order of the primary narrative, one that necessitates a second 'descent', as will become clear, for the subversive heroine. This identifies a purposeful manipulation of narrative order within this context that is meaningful in its prominence.

iii. Fire

In the progress from darkness to light, which is the area covered by [the phase of narrative 'ascent'], we find the myths of the origin of fire, which are usually myths of stealing it'.¹⁶³ Collins employs the symbol of fire – one that in its literary capacity generally signifies a purging of the past and an ensuing sense of renewal or rebirth – to particular effect in *The Woman in White*. Here, it contributes to the tensions between primary and secondary narrative progressions, as well as operating to eliminate the double and restore social order. While its metaphorical use throughout the novel stresses

concerns over expression and conflict, its final emergence in a literal form serves to re-establish the balance only at a primary narrative level, indicating a reversal of narrative focus and the re-establishment of the traditional order. Its previous use in the text has however identified fire as a symbol relevant to the secondary narrative; the re-emergence of the hero's world is thus shown to involve a *transfer* of power through the symbol, emphasising the interdependence of the two states.

Functioning as a signifier of power within the text, the symbol of fire is closely implicated in the dynamics of imprisonment and liberation. Consequently, it is connected with the female characters for whom this is so important, and is suggestive of the wholeness for which they strive. In *No Name*, accordingly, fire is described as a visible force in Magdalen as she acts on stage, fulfilling her natural talent; Marian, on the other hand, explains to Laura how 'my tongue burns to tell your uncle that he and Sir Percival are not to have it all their own way', while her fingers 'burn' as she writes of Laura's predicament (WW, pp.182, 179). This unbalancing of power within the hierarchy is clearly indicated by these characters' access to the symbol, which the narrative proceeds to redistribute. The two female villains in *The Woman in White* whose malevolence has in some way been curbed are described in terms of being frozen. The identity of the real Countess Fosco lies concealed beneath an 'outer covering of icy constraint', and she is 'frozen up in the strangest manner in herself'; while her 'icy manner' is expressed 'in tones of freezing reproof' (pp.219, 218, 258, 236). The denial of life and expression suggested by these images is seen when the Countess is described as being 'as cold as a statue'. Mrs. Catherick's unflinching face and emotionless stare are likewise accompanied by a 'cool contempt of [...] manner' in dealing with Hartright (pp.219, 496). The transformation which the two characters undergo when provoked is evident in metaphors

¹⁶³ Frye, pp.133-34.

of fire, and also suggests the danger implicit in the symbol. Spurred by jealousy, the Countess' 'cold blue eyes ca[tch] light; her dull white cheeks flush[] into bright colour; she looked years younger then her age, in an instant' (p.311). In a similar fashion, Hartright watches as the '*flaring* paper' of Mrs Catherick's parlour is transferred into a 'furtive light of hatred lurking deep in her steady eyes' (pp.494, 501).

The dangerous potential suggested here is presented again, and more directly, when Marian expresses her wish that one of the lamps being carried into the room could burn Fosco up (p.292). Again, on being shown around the galleries of Blackwater, she notices that they are 'rendered additionally dark and dismal by hideous family portraits – every one of which I should like to burn' (p.204). The violence of such statements reinforces the symbol's purpose in functioning as a metaphorical vent for expression, for this anger will eventually be released through the manner of Sir Percival's death. The metaphors of fire and violence continue to gain momentum, growing more frequent and powerful. Marian asserts that 'I should have broken down altogether and burst into a violent fit of crying, if my tears had not been burnt up in the heat of my anger', and harnesses that energy into writing (p.185). From her writing-desk, she can watch '[t]he sunset [...] burning redly on the wilderness of trees' (p.211), a fire also expressed by her in the frenzied transcription of the unfolding plot into her diary. This activity appropriately culminates when she writes herself into a fever – 'the throbbing heat' and 'the ceaseless writing, faster and faster, hotter and hotter, driving on' (p.342) – in a direct parallel to Lucilla Finch, who writes herself back into blindness. The return of the narrative to a state of objective patriarchal order is thus signalled by the deterioration of imaginative and creative freedom for the female identity through this motif.

It is clear from Collins' use of the symbol that the transference of this power back to Hartright is the first step towards restoring balance in his world. On visiting Mrs

Catherick, he is consequently aware that if her temper 'once *flamed* out on me, she might say the words which would put the clue in my hands' (p.499, my italics). This, in fact, is exactly what happens, and Walter suddenly feels 'my head was burning hot', and makes his way to the church with 'my blood throbbing through my veins at fever-heat' (pp.520, 522). The site at which the fraudulent baronet is displaced, and Hartright's standing within the narrative world may begin to be resumed, is rich with such imagery. A direct parallel is drawn between the fire in Hartright's thoughts and that which he finds leaping through the shattered vestry skylight. The imminent re-establishment of the primary narrative is suggested when one of Sir Percival's servants mistakes Hartright for his master, a succession that will indeed be enabled by the fatal conflagration.

While facilitating movement into a state of renewal for the hero, fire has also been shown to eliminate any characters – or characteristics in the case of Marian – that stand in the way of this end. The finale of the novel, with the marriage of Hartright and Laura, and Marian's demotion into a secondary figure, is also relevant to the motif of fire. Suttee has already been implied when, preceding her marriage to Sir Percival, Laura had voiced her wish to remove 'troubles and heart-burnings that any sacrifice of mine can prevent' (p.183). When she sees Hartright anew following the baronet's death, it is while standing beside her own – that is to say Anne Catherick's – grave; now '[h]er dim eyes lit with a sudden fire, and flashed through the veil that hung over them' (p.439). This image is inverted by Marian's fate, after she is consumed from within by a fever. Seeing her at the cemetery, Walter now observes '[p]ain and fear and grief written on her as with a brand' (p.419). Hence, the displaced suttee of the unconventional woman is a grotesque repetition of the burial of the written text/body, only after which a sense of order can be re-established for the hero. The alteration in the nature of the fire-symbol is noteworthy, for, initially a signifier of Self-expression and power within the secondary narrative, it

has been reappropriated to serve the hero's needs, which include the destruction of the creative imagination that is so counterproductive to his powers.

3.4 Conclusion

Tamar Heller claims that Collins concludes his narratives in a consistent manner, one that she consequently calls his 'trademark ending – a containment both of female power and of history'.¹⁶⁴ This view can also be translated through Northrop Frye's theory, which includes the motif of the *doppelgänger* within its scope. He posits that a sense of restoration is achieved by narrative 'ascent'; hence this '[s]elf-recognition, or attaining one's original identity, reverses all the Narcissus and twin and doppelganger themes that occur in the descent'.¹⁶⁵ The acquisition of a wholeness of identity dismisses the need for doubling, therefore, and returns the hero to a strong position of unshared superiority. In *The Woman in White*, the movement towards this position is driven within what has been termed the primary narrative by Hartright's desire to win Laura. The significance of such a theme to this aspect of narrative structure lies in the fact that '[r]omance [...] eventually takes us into the great Eros theme in which a lover is driven by his love to ascend to a higher world. This ascent is traditionally full of images of climbing or flying, of mountains, towers, ladders, spiral staircases, the shooting of arrows, or coming out of the sea on to an island'.¹⁶⁶ Walter's return from the dark forests of Central America is indeed precipitated by the shooting of arrows at him and his companions; thereafter, he acts to save Sir Percival by climbing onto the vestry roof.

Although the hero's 'ascent' is fairly clear within the narrative structure, the female doubles are eliminated by it. The Countess disappears with her husband, while

¹⁶⁴ Heller, p.107.

¹⁶⁵ Frye, p.152.

Anne Catherick dies of heart failure. These events are important to the primary narrative structure, for it is only through them that Laura's position as heiress can be proven, and Hartright's role as master of Limmeridge can be established. The couple's marriage can only be made complete by the restoration of Laura's lost memory which, following the pattern of narrative structure, constitutes the final break in consciousness that must take place in response to the initial one. Together with this, marriage is also enabled by the loss of her double, Anne: 'one girl is killed off mainly to clear her out of the way so that the hero can marry the other in a monogamous society'.¹⁶⁷ The shift of identity that signals narrative 'ascent' thus takes place through the *legal* recognition of Laura; although her identity has already been established within the text, this is insufficient, and events must reach their conclusion in reference to the social order, that is to say on a primary narrative level. The word of the law, as already demonstrated in examining the role of writing in the novel, thus takes precedent over personal truth.

The conspicuousness of Laura's whiteness is made all the more significant in this context, for '[a]part from the idealizing of the pre-sexual state, there is a sense in which virginity is an appropriate image for attaining original identity: what is objectively untouched symbolizes what is subjectively contained, so to speak'.¹⁶⁸ Laura's "wholeness" in this respect is antagonized by the assault on Marian's diary in what may be read as a symbolic rape, yet Marian's subsequent withdrawal from a prominent position within the narrative is conducive to Laura's attainment of identity as wife and mother. Marian's own position within the structural narrative progression is certainly not parallel to her double's, that is, Hartright's. While 'descent' is itself characterised by imprisonment, death, or paralysis, she, who has in some sense undergone all, remains

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p.151.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.143.

permanently transfigured by her experiences, unlike Laura, who recovers her lost beauty. Marian's fate resembles both that of Mrs Lecount and that of Magdalen in *No Name*. The first of these is rendered physically unrecognisable by illness, and appears towards the end of the narrative like a ghost, her hair white and her beauty lost. Magdalen is altered constitutionally in a parallel manner. The treating doctor's diagnosis is significant here, for he can only observe that her 'whole nervous system has given way; *all the ordinary functions of her brain are in a state of collapse*. I can give you no plainer explanation than that of the nature of her malady' (p.704, my italics). Both of these transformations are essential to the fulfilment of the primary narrative 'ascent' in this text; the villainous Mrs Lecount is disempowered, and the strong-willed Magdalen weakened before the conventional marital union can take place.

Whereas Laura's life within marriage serves to reinforce the social order, Marian's presence nevertheless continues to disturb narrative harmony in some form; her existence is somewhat superfluous now, and emphasises the artificial nature of the novel's conclusion by reflecting Laura's imprisonment within marriage. Although critics have commented that, in his endings, 'Collins reinscribes the very ideals he criticizes',¹⁶⁹ there has been a failure to properly acknowledge the fact that these ideals are undercut. Such a viewpoint is however suggested in several other works. Godfrey Ablewhite, for instance, comments that 'women try marriage as a Refuge, far more numerous than they are willing to admit; and, what is more, they find that marriage has justified their confidence in it' (*M*, p.264). This idea is extended further by the implication that marriage must necessarily entail the resignation of a woman's privacy, and of the personal space that has been at the centre of contention in these texts. In *The New*

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p.153.

¹⁶⁹ Nayder, p.122.

Magdalen, Horace Holmcroft reproaches Mercy by noting how 'you shut yourself up in your own room. I am not your husband yet – I have no right to follow you in' (*NM*, p.259); it is appropriate, in this context, that marriage should be referred to as the event in which 'a woman's personal interests are most closely *bound up*' (*WW*, p.186, my italics). Having displaced narrative focus to a large extent by concentrating on Marian's rather than Hartright's progression through themes of 'descent' and 'ascent', Collins has purposely constructed values throughout the narrative which now undercut the satisfactoriness of the novel's conclusion. While the primary narrative is successful in recovering its harmony, it is clear from the author's subversion of these themes that he wishes the focus to be placed as far as possible on the secondary narrative level, referring to Marian in this case, and consequently on her ultimate immobility within the narrative underworld.

The present study has demonstrated the nature of Collins' concerns by the identification of two narrative levels, the development of which voice/anxieties which it would otherwise have been difficult to express. The reader is first shown the terms of the narrative underworld as it relates to the transgressive female, a character who normally remains liminal in the exclusive focus on a primary narrative. Collins then goes on to develop this narrative progression independently of the traditional, primary narrative structure, enforcing a division of the two. The aspiration towards 'ascent' for the female identity assumes a central position within the narratives. The acquisition of this state is signalled by the disappearance or marginalisation of the double, a figure whose re-emergence heralds a second fragmentation of identity that takes place towards the end of the text. This is seen to coincide with the hero's 'ascent' within the primary narrative. By restructuring the traditional mode, Collins has manipulated the motif of the double for an

unconventional purpose, one that has enabled him to work on two levels of meaning within the text.

Gilbert and Gubar claim that '[d]ramatizations of imprisonment and escape are so all-pervasive in nineteenth-century literature by women that we believe they represent a uniquely female tradition in this period'. The employment of such imagery and motifs in fiction written by men is attributed, conversely, to a concern about 'the individual and society'. They conclude that '[t]he distinction between male and female images of imprisonment is – and always has been – a distinction between, on the one hand, that which is both metaphysical and metaphorical, and on the other hand, that which is social and actual'.¹⁷⁰ As this chapter has demonstrated, however, the fiction of Wilkie Collins cannot be placed indisputably within only one category, for his concerns are expressed in a manner entirely uncharacteristic of what would have been expected of the period. His writing consequently constitutes a significant development of the literature of the double in this context, and can be more closely related to the work of Daphne du Maurier, whose writing was indeed formulated from a highly personal perspective.

Chapter 4: Daphne du Maurier

4.1 Introduction

The advanced treatment of the double that has been demonstrated in the literature of Wilkie Collins, in contrast to the older tradition later re-instituted by Stevenson, is continued by Daphne du Maurier in her representation of the double. The development in the function of the motif can thus be traced through an assessment of its treatment by these three writers. An exploration of romance narrative structure as outlined by Northrop Frye will reveal that du Maurier, like Collins, creates an alternative to what the present study has called the primary narrative.¹⁷¹ This secondary narrative level will here also be assessed in terms of the themes of 'descent' and 'ascent' to clarify the author's intentions by it. As a basis for her representation of the double, the fiction of Daphne du Maurier consistently expresses a desire to establish a form of harmony. Although this could be argued for most pieces of writing, it assumes a far greater relevance here, for the author gives it a central – if not *the* central – place in her fiction. The reader is certainly made aware of this need, for *Rebecca*, as well as other works dealing with the double, accepts this fact as a starting point. As a consequence, Frye's explanation of the structure of romance narrative is particularly useful here, where the themes which the present study has examined in the work of Wilkie Collins and, to a lesser extent, in the work of R. L. Stevenson, also appear. Plot, character and themes of 'descent' and 'ascent' thus either contribute towards creating, or are the creations of, this central idea.

¹⁷⁰ Gilbert and Gubar, pp.85-6.

¹⁷¹ *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), chapters four and five.

The overwhelming attention given to the need for harmony is relevant to Stevenson's and Collins' writing as well as to du Maurier's, although it is explored in a different manner by each. Stevenson's treatment, as the present study has shown, is more firmly established in an older tradition, and it is his inability to break free of the pressures of patriarchy, Church and city – all of which are essential in giving rise to the theme of the double in his work – that defeats a sense of progress, or narrative 'ascent'. Collins, albeit writing at an earlier date, draws on the romantic tradition of the Lady of Shalott to both highlight and enable a form of transcendence via dreams and the imagination. The attention that he gives to the female double is an integral part of his success in this respect, for the ambiguities of position and gender in *The Woman in White* and other texts lend themselves to the struggle to overcome social as well as personal boundaries. Du Maurier develops the theme yet further, centralizing issues of gender, the female as double, and the desire to transcend given states.¹⁷² The new perspective of a female author's approach to the topic is of course a vital constituent of this development, for it manifests itself as a personal rather than a social approach. The predominance of the dream-state, which is given a far smaller if still significant role by Collins and Stevenson, is consequently an important distinction. There remains, however, an element of thought and experience particular to the author that colours the manner in which this narrative process is approached; in du Maurier's case, this is a crisis of gender. A consideration of this aspect, as well as of other relevant elements of the author's life, will therefore be valuable in enlightening the reader's perspective of her work, as well as in explicating the nature of those issues she attempts to resolve through a narrative 'descent' and 'ascent', a

¹⁷² In the Gothic tradition, the concepts surrounding the female doubles that appear in these texts involve a tension between the issues of freedom and social expectation. Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* illustrates this point perfectly when the heroine climbs onto the roof at Thornfield 'while Adèle was playing with her nurse, and Mrs Fairfax was making jellies', and yearns for 'a power of vision' that might reach beyond ordinary sight. Edited with an introduction by Q. D. Leavis (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985),

progression in which the double assumes a central role. In this way, the role of the double will also be clarified.

Family life – within which, Forster argues, du Maurier felt herself to be somehow isolated from early childhood – clearly played the initial role in forming ideas and values which were to be highly influential throughout her life, most particularly in awakening an awareness and analysis of the Self, a concern that, in a barely disguised manner, forms the basis of the majority of her work.¹⁷³ It was Gerald, her famous stage actor father, however, who was to first inspire feelings in her which formed the basis of her interest in the nature of duality, and determined the shape which that interest was to take. Disappointed that Daphne was not the son he wanted, Gerald repeatedly, it seems, voiced this disappointment to his daughter, who at a tender age began to feel the desirability of being a boy. The contents of a poem written for her by Gerald clarify the nature of the confusion she must have felt, for its sentiments are ambiguous: the first stanza expresses the wish, 'If only she'd been born a boy', while the second, as Forster notes, rejoices in her femininity.¹⁷⁴ Gerald's awareness of this very femininity, indeed, was to develop in later years into a virtually obsessive jealousy, one which Daphne closely parodies in her account of the ultimately fatal father-daughter relationship in *The Progress of Julius*. The resulting sense of a lack of a fixed identity of her own, and the assumption that she should be other than she was, had a life-long effect on Daphne, and a huge impact on her work.

The effects of her relationship with Gerald were, if anything, exacerbated by the young Daphne's strained relationship with her mother, by whom she felt herself to be

p.140.

¹⁷³ Forster explores this aspect of du Maurier's life in fair detail in *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow Books, 1994), going on to accept the author's gender identity crisis and sexuality as central to her preoccupation with identity.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p.14.

ignored and unloved. This distance was increased, as she partly realised, by her closeness to Gerald.¹⁷⁵ It is only relevant to mention here that Daphne and Gerald's closeness did little to help the mother-daughter relationship; on the contrary, it merely added a flavour of jealousy, and the two women were never able to develop, even in later life, a meaningful relationship. As Judith Kegan Gardiner notes, 'being properly female in a society usually involves doing the sorts of things mother does and being the sort of woman she is'; it can be said with certainty that Daphne, consciously at least, avoided this form of identification with her mother, preferring instead to take Gerald as her role-model.¹⁷⁶

Early recollections of watching her father in the theatre outline a dawning comprehension that Gerald was, as she saw it, pretending to be someone else. This appears to have been a significant realisation, an example of the possibility of assuming a new identity. Emulating this "pretence" was thus her first practiced means of escaping from an identity she perceived as lacking, for instance in sociability. The closeness between her and Gerald, and her desire not only to please him but to be like him, as well as a recognition of her own shortcomings, are sensed in the following statement:

I saw why D [Gerald] liked to dress up and pretend to be someone else; I began to do it myself, and so did Angela, and even Baby [...] the very act of putting on fancy dress and becoming another person stopped the feeling of panic when visitors came.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Nancy Chodorow attempts a deep examination of the formation of the female identity through its relationship with the mother, also outlining how this affects the daughter's relationship with the father, in *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1989).

¹⁷⁶ 'On Female Identity', in *Writing and Sexual Difference*, edited by Elizabeth Abel (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982), p.185.

¹⁷⁷ du Maurier, D., *Growing Pains: The Shaping of a Writer* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1977), p.22. All quotations from *Growing Pains* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

Perhaps subconsciously, however, Daphne realised that Gerald's and her own use of this 'fancy dress' were rather different; whereas he merely 'pretended', Daphne '*became* another person', using and adapting this as a means of exploring new identities. The identity which she chose for her masculine persona, her *alter ego*, is revealing, for Eric Avon, a Rugby schoolboy, was able to experience all the license and adventure that she as a girl could not. The development of a *male* persona at this stage was surely implicated in a desire to identify with her father as opposed to her mother. This identification, indeed, was to be re-played in her closeness to her only son, whom she always maintained reminded her of Gerald.

The physical mark of the ending of childhood came as a great blow with the onset of menstruation, a distress expressed in the short story 'The Pool', based on her own experience. The "boy" was thus never to grow up, but was, as she put it in *Growing Pains*, left behind on Never Never Island. This distress, partly a reluctance to join what she saw as a deceitful adult world, must also have included a degree of frustration at being forced into the female body she had no desire to inhabit. The "boy", a Peter Pan, was therefore revisited throughout her life in his land of dreams, a form of displacement made possible by the creative imagination. In a letter to Ellen Doubleday (10 Dec.1947) she later explained, in the third person, how

when [the author finally] found Menabilly and lived in it alone, she opened up the box sometimes and let the phantom, who was neither girl nor boy but disembodied spirit, dance in the evening when there was no one to see.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Quoted by Forster, p.222.

Forster consequently refers to this element of the author's personality as 'the boy-in-the-box'.

Du Maurier's awareness of this *alter ego* was also to become closely implicated in her love of Cornwall, where she felt at home and at peace with herself. Indeed, she immediately imposed her own inner strife onto a "double" existence in London and in Fowey: remembering Sunday visits at Cannon Hall, she recalls, 'I have to become an unnatural Sunday person and be part of it all. The real me is at Fowey in my boat, alone' (*Growing Pains*, p.131, quoted from the author's diary). Environment is established as being vital to the author's acknowledgement and perception of her own inner sense of division; its role in depicting the break in consciousness that precedes a fall into a narrative underworld in her fiction is hence doubly relevant, for this stage is frequently accompanied by the double. This 'descent' additionally functions as a device which highlights certain central concerns in du Maurier's work, for instance reflecting a division of gender or gender characteristics, just as the author recognised landscape itself as dividing the lady she was forced to be in London and the "boy" who found freedom in Cornwall, a split closely echoed in *Frenchman's Creek*.

It is the act of writing, within the texts as well as in her own life, however, that is the predominant factor through which a displacement of identity – a transcendence or 'ascent' – is achieved. It was no coincidence that du Maurier only started writing in earnest once removed from the limitations of London. Cornwall was ideally suited to this purpose; the relative isolation and open space suited her perfectly, and the county appears time and again in her work. Indeed, the author's fascination with the Brontës may well have been increased by the nature of their relationship to the Yorkshire countryside (in many ways like Cornwall), and by the influence it had on their fiction. For du Maurier, however, Menabilly epitomised all that she felt about Cornwall, as well as becoming an

intrinsic part of her creative force as a writer. It is little surprise, then, that both Cornwall and Menabilly almost always appear either directly or in thin disguise in her work, while the characters associated with them also often express feelings which are her own. Horner and Zlosnik suggest that part of this attraction to Cornwall stemmed from a need to rebel against her familial background, for both her father and her grandfather's fame was urban-based.¹⁷⁹ Yet Daphne also felt a close affinity to the creativity of her grandfather, of whom she reminded Gerald, and whose work she read time and again. Later too, she would draw parallels between herself and George du Maurier's feelings of dual nationality – of a bond with both England and France (*Growing Pains*, p.95). This parallel is taken even further when she likens her grandfather's Whitby to her own dear Fowey. It was perhaps this sense of dual loyalty that contributed to her love of Cornwall and its people, whom she felt were a race quite apart from the English, a distinction which also held true for their county.

The act of writing was one of great personal importance to du Maurier, an even more extreme enactment of her "escape" from London to Cornwall. From the first, writing assumed a distinct parallel to the play-acting copied from her father, as she explored the sensations involved in *becoming* her characters: '[i]t was fun becoming Joseph, a man of 50 madly wanting his silly virgin of 19', she wrote in her diary about *The Loving Spirit* (quoted in *Growing Pains*, p.152), whilst *The King's General* even had her donning the outfit of a Cavalier to aid her identification with the subject-matter. Indeed, this "masculine" freedom was echoed by that which she found at Menabilly, for the characters she "became" whilst writing can be construed as being facets of the Self; as Margaret Forster notes, '[o]ften, she felt she was outside her bodily

¹⁷⁹ Horner, Avril, and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity, and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1998), p.65.

self, describing how she looked down from above and saw herself laughing and chatting in a way her inner self found quite extraordinary', almost as if she were one of her own creations.¹⁸⁰

A sense, if not of self-reconciliation, then at least of temporary forgetfulness, was achieved through writing. Speaking of the writer, the author claims that 'what he is running from is not the enclosing world and its inhabitants, but his own inadequate self that fears to meet the demands which life makes upon it' (*Growing Pains*, p.65). It is clear from this that writing was an escape not only from that part of herself which she deemed 'inadequate', but also from an association with the real world. It is thus no coincidence that the majority of her first person singular narrators – those of *I'll Never Be Young Again*, *My Cousin Rachel*, *The Scapegoat*, *The Flight of the Falcon*, and *The House on the Strand* – are male. Furthermore, they are, even as she herself recognised, extensions of her childhood *alter ego*, Eric Avon: 'So, if there was an Eric Avon struggling to escape from my feminine unconscious through the years, he certainly succeeded in the imagination, however different from the prototype, for I would identify with my series of inadequate narrators' (*Growing Pains*, p.60). Yet there is also a difference, for

their personalities can be said to be undeveloped, inadequate, sharing a characteristic that had never been Eric's [...] For each of my five narrators depended, for reassurance, on a male friend older than himself. (*Growing Pains*, p.59)

¹⁸⁰ Forster, p.417.

This, from a psychoanalytical perspective, can of course easily be linked with du Maurier's own dependence on her father, especially in the light of a likening of Philip Ashley, the young hero of *My Cousin Rachel*, to herself, and Ambrose, his older cousin, to Gerald.¹⁸¹ It is interesting that, having pin-pointed a sense of inadequacy as being the one quality from which a writer wishes to escape through his or her art, du Maurier then also refers to her male narrators as being 'inadequate'. This suggests further potential for progression into a yet more developed, more 'adequate', character. In this respect, it is notable that the author, in creating the female narrators of *The King's General*, *The Glassblowers*, and *Rebecca*, attributes them with just this strength, for they 'depend[] upon no one but themselves' (*Growing Pains*, p.60). The present study will explore the gradual emergence of a matriarchal energy, most especially in du Maurier's later work, which can be said to constitute this final phase of her displacement into a more 'adequate' persona, whilst also assessing the manner in which it relates to the narrative progression.

Since it is clear that the elements of make-believe which du Maurier applied to her circumstances from childhood later took their ultimate form in the activity of writing, Sigmund Freud's essay on writers and 'phantasy', 'Creative Writing and Day-Dreaming', will be particularly helpful.¹⁸² As the title suggests, this essay takes as its subject the relationship between the act of creative writing and escapism, an association far more directly relevant to this author and her art than it is to either Stevenson or Collins. Using Freud's essay as a point of reference will hopefully support not only the present study's proposal that writing was a form of liberation for the author herself, and that it constituted a development of her childhood forays into imaginary worlds, but that this

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p.421.

¹⁸² In *The Freud Reader*, edited by Peter Gay (London: Vintage, 1995).

experience is often also transferred onto her fictional worlds and characters, where it plays a vital role in enabling an 'ascent' on a secondary narrative level.

Freud draws a direct parallel in his essay between a child's play and the adult's creative writing, in that both are involved in the creation of an imaginary world largely separate from the known physical one. Indeed, adult day-dreaming, or as Freud also calls it, 'phantasying', is seen to be merely a replacement of the child's play. Thus '[t]he opposite of play is not what is serious but what is real'.¹⁸³ This is important when considering du Maurier's adult creativity, for it can be viewed not merely as a replacement, but as a *development* of the childhood "pretend" which she so often practiced. Thus many of the ways and means by which the child Daphne would try to enter her imaginary world are also to be found in her adult creative works – dressing up in costume, play-acting, landscape, and the assumption of a masculine identity. The author's own personal attempt at resolution is consequently played out in her fiction, where it is manifest as an 'ascent' within the narrative, and which she recognised as being therapeutic in this sense. Thus Freud's remark that '[t]he motive forces of phantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single phantasy is the fulfilment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality', would seem to apply closely to the use to which du Maurier put her creative writing.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, her own acceptance of the act of writing as the ultimate direct doorway into an imaginary fantasy-world in which she could feel at peace makes the inclusion of the theme of writing in her fiction an introduction of a central means of transition towards a narrative 'ascent'. The double is therefore an expression of the initial fragmentation and displacement that takes place, while its loss is representative of a transcendence into a state of wholeness. This is strictly related to the existence of a

¹⁸³ Ibid, p.437.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p.439.

secondary narrative level, as will be seen, one that refers more particularly to a creative and imaginative life, as already illustrated in the fiction of Wilkie Collins. Du Maurier subverts traditional narrative structure to express her own personal dilemma, one that is consequently translated into a fictional format, and that will be clarified through a consideration of the themes involved in the narrative progression.

Like Stevenson and Collins, du Maurier did not subscribe to organised religion; despite a desire to share her husband's unwavering faith, she never felt that this was possible, although her attraction to it is evident in her work, and more especially in her later fiction. Part of this interest focuses, unsurprisingly, on figures in the Bible who were in some way seen to exemplify her own feelings: 'The Bible stories were good. I liked Cain better than Abel, and Esau better than Jacob [...] Why wasn't I born a boy? They did all the brave things' (*Growing Pains*, pp.25-26). The author's interest in these particular pairs of biblical figures (representing as they do antagonistic facets of a single identity) is significant, as is her sympathy, not with the traditionally righteous brother, but rather with him whose rights and freedom are *suppressed*. Du Maurier furthermore immediately identifies herself with these figures, moving directly from speaking of them to questioning why she herself was not born a boy, for boys did all the exciting things. Again the desire to free the repressed 'boy' within her is seen as a means of moving towards a sense of Self-integration based upon the author's perception of maleness. This desire is one that is enacted in *Rebecca*, where it shapes the portrayal of the secondary narrative 'ascent'.

The overall influence of religious faith on du Maurier was of course far wider than has been outlined here, a fact which becomes more clear in her later works. Yet neither providence nor any other form of religious solution is ever drawn upon as a possible answer to fictional dilemmas. On the contrary, the presence of the supernatural

here, as in the works of the other authors considered in the present study, enforces this fact, as does the inclusion of a strong element of Fate. The confusion of the chronology of narrative events is a characteristic of all of the central works in this thesis; in *Rebecca*, events are entirely inverted, with the chronological end being placed at the start of the narrative, and results in a strong sense of inevitability. Appropriately, one of Freud's criteria for the presence of a "fantasy" element in creative writing is the protection of the central hero by providence, one which is subverted by these writers into fatalism. In this sense, of course, realism is also not implicated in the resolution of the authorial conflict.

What the present study will attempt to show in examining *Rebecca* is that the text itself charts the progress of the narrator/du Maurier's ('Yes, the I in *Rebecca* was me, well purged')¹⁸⁵ wish to *become* that elusive "boy", a wish that results in the subversion of standard narrative structure. By creating a secondary narrative level, the author expands the role of the motif of the double, and enables a more profound reading of the text itself. Important to this idea is the recognition that the entirety of the text is related to us with the highest degree of subjective feeling by the nameless narrator. Indeed, the opening line – 'Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again' – serves to emphasise the introverted nature of the textual world.¹⁸⁶ Margaret Forster also recognises that

never before had [the author] entered the mind of any of her characters to this extent [...] what happens in this woman's mind is more important than what

¹⁸⁵ *Letters From Menabilly: Portrait of a Friendship*, edited by Oriel Malet (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993), p.32, from a letter, undated, early 1950's. All quotations from *Letters From Menabilly* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

¹⁸⁶ *Rebecca* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1994). All quotations from *Rebecca* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

actually takes place around her. The book begins with a dream and retains this fantasy element to great effect. There are endless daydreams.¹⁸⁷

This study would not only agree that what takes place within the narrator's mind is of greater significance than the 'actual' occurrences in the novel, but would also add that the nature of the narrative renders this distinction unclear; in fact, the reader can never know whether the novel in its entirety is not merely a structured drama of what is in fact a psychological process.¹⁸⁸

Supporting and extending this idea is du Maurier's letter to Ellen Doubleday, December 10, 1947, nearly a decade after the book's publication, in which she describes herself

as a little girl like Flave [the author's daughter], only very shy, always biting her nails. But never being a little girl. Always being a little boy. And growing up with a boy's mind and a boy's heart [...] So that at eighteen this half-breed fell in love, as a boy would.¹⁸⁹

Rebecca can also be said to enact the tensions between the shy and awkward girl-child and the adventurous 'boy'. It is Rebecca herself – a being almost wholly defined within the confines of the narrator's imagination – who assumes what du Maurier interprets as masculine qualities. Her sexual prowess, her strength of character, her ability to interact successfully with anyone, her skills as hostess, as well as her physical fitness and energy – all describe that which the narrator lacks, and contribute to her jealousy of the first

¹⁸⁷ Forster, p.137.

¹⁸⁸ Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1979), make the point that the author/protagonist's double is specifically linked to a sense of interiority (p.83).

wife. 'She ought to have been a boy' (*R*, p.179), 'she looked like a boy in her sailing kit' (p.205) – these appraisals of Rebecca contrast with the narrator's meekness and failure to define herself to the reader as a substantial character, and are exploited to emphasise her role as stereotypically "feminine". Her employment as a companion at the start of the novel establishes her position as a dependent, and even with her marriage it is quite clear that her role remains largely unchanged. It is this establishment of and conformation to male rule in the novel from which the narrator seeks to be liberated by "becoming" Rebecca.

The close relationship of fantasy with what du Maurier perceives as the elusive Masculine here is reflected in the terms of the author's interest in Branwell Brontë, and her theory that he was either the author or co-author of *Wuthering Heights*. In *The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë*, du Maurier maintains that the fantasy world which constituted such a large part of the Brontës' creativity was both inspired and directed by Branwell, without whom the novels of the sisters would therefore never have existed.¹⁹⁰ The source of creative fantasy is thus defined as a male quality, with du Maurier showing interest in the characters through whom Branwell wrote, first Alexander Percy, then Harriet, and particularly in the change of gender. Her comments on Branwell's relationship to Percy are voiced sympathetically as the adoption of an 'exalted frame' who could accomplish many things, and the will to obscure one's insignificance (p.81). Like her own male persona, Percy's importance here, in her opinion at any rate, comes through his ability to *act*, as well as in his capacity to be 'an ever-present remedy to pain' (p.81). It is the 'pain' attributed to Branwell that suggests du Maurier's feelings towards her own Other as a source of relief, and confirms the role she allowed it to play in her

¹⁸⁹ Forster, p.221.

¹⁹⁰ (London: Victor Gollancz, 1960), preface, p.9.

own life. There is here, however, a suggestion that two extremes must be balanced – or made whole – in order to result in a harmonious existence, something Branwell was never able to accomplish, but which finds shape in *The Scapegoat*, where John's good deeds in the Gué family are attributed to a third entity, a fusion of Jean and John who has no corporeal existence, yet who brings release to both.¹⁹¹ The desire for such harmony in a personal capacity is also voiced in a letter dated June 1955, in which the author links it to marital equilibrium: '[i]t is the correct *balance* you must strive for in marriage, and the correct *balance* of your own individual self' (*Letters From Menabilly*, p.50). It is this 'balance', consequently, which is the writer's ultimate aim, and which is enacted in the progression of the narrator towards what she interprets as a more harmonious, whole, existence, as represented in a movement from 'descent' to 'ascent'. In *Jane Eyre*, the novel referred to as '*Rebecca's* aunt' in its use of Gothic, we also see a fantasy of 'escape-into-wholeness'.¹⁹² Despite the many similarities of form and content, however, the first of these employs a linear, progressive method by which the protagonist can journey to a conclusive reward. In *Rebecca*, on the contrary, the static narrative world demands that the flight be a figurative one of the imagination, and the result accordingly intangible, as will be seen. Both nevertheless ascribe that which is desirable with a quality of masculinity, one that centres around an interpretation of liberty.

The reasons why the double is so relevant to du Maurier's ideas is suggested by Freud when he says that the writer is often inclined 'to split up his ego, by self-observation, into many part-egos, and, in consequence, to personify the conflicting currents of his own mental life in several heroes'.¹⁹³ If we apply this here to the heroes of the real and fantasy worlds within the text, the nature of the relationship between the

¹⁹¹ *The Scapegoat* (London: Arrow Books, 1992), p.276.

¹⁹² Gilbert and Gubar, pp.337, 336.

narrator and Rebecca, for instance, becomes more clear, as does that between John and Jean de Gué. It is thus a possibility, and one that grows more certain through considering the text from the angle proposed by the present study, that the characters of the narrator and Rebecca are indeed such fragments of a single identity, and that it is the relationship between them that ultimately shapes and determines the secondary narrative progression. It is the existence of this secondary narrative that marks a departure from the traditional mode, and allows the expression of thoughts and ideas that remain inaccessible on a primary narrative level.

Although written at a significantly later date, du Maurier's fiction – like Collins' and Stevenson's – can in many ways be said to conform to an earlier Gothic tradition, something which the recently published *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* accepts as its basis.¹⁹⁴ Among other influences – Katherine Mansfield, Maupassant, J. M. Barrie, the Brontës, Wilde, Maugham and Scott – the work of the author's grandfather was also of course familiar, and his own treatment of the fragmented identity in *Trilby* and *The Martian* may well have added to the attention which his granddaughter gave to the theme. She was also very familiar with the work of both Stevenson and Collins. *Treasure Island* was memorised in sections and acted out by the du Maurier children, with the young Daphne 'playing the part of Jim Hawkins, with occasional lapses into Long John Silver' (*Growing Pains*, p.33). *The Wrecker* and 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' are also mentioned in *Growing Pains*, and during her formative years, 'R.L.Stevenson [was] never far away' (p.66), whilst her later visit to Barbizon prompted thoughts of Stevenson's own stay there. Collins' rambles around Cornwall and his experiences there are also documented in *Vanishing Cornwall*,

¹⁹³ Gay, p.441.

¹⁹⁴ Horner and Zlosnik, 1998.

suggesting a knowledge of his work that is confirmed by her son.¹⁹⁵ Yet du Maurier also brings a new element to her treatment of the theme of the double, one perhaps increased by her perspective as a female writer; her persistent focus on the realms of the imagination – which, accompanying the shift from social to personal concern, is granted a far more dominant and direct position than in the work of the male authors – signals the way forward to the later twentieth century women writers' concern with the mental, spiritual and emotional life. These, indeed, are qualities indispensable to the construction of the secondary narrative world.

Recent academic interest in du Maurier's work has been largely a result of revelations of her ambiguous sexuality, an area focused upon by Margaret Forster in her biography of the author. Although the intention here is not to place undue emphasis on her life but rather on her work, the very nature of those themes which the present study explores in du Maurier's writing have necessitated a brief consideration of the influences in her life which gave rise to them. Horner and Zlosnik observe that '[t]he difference between the 'self' and the 'other' may manifest itself through age, gender, social class, 'foreignness', or any combination of these' (p.31) in the author's fiction; what the present study will attempt to show is how a range of often more subtly developed means, derived from themes of 'descent' and 'ascent', define du Maurier's doubles and shape *two* narrative progressions in her work. Although our arguments do intersect at several points, this is due to the fact that there is often only one plausible angle from which to approach certain aspects of these texts. What has been illustrated thus far, however, is the role which ideas central to this study's consideration of du Maurier's fiction played in her life. Their application to the text reveals the presence of a secondary narrative, one that is formulated through them; the 'descent' and 'ascent' that refer to this secondary narrative

¹⁹⁵ In a personal letter from Kits Browning.

level will be shown to be determined by the factors that have been outlined in this section. As a result of this knowledge, the text is made more meaningful, as are the purpose and function of the double which is so closely related to this scheme. As the majority of these narrative themes are to be found in *Rebecca*, this will be taken as the central text for this chapter, although other works will be drawn upon to support the argument, or where otherwise relevant.

4.2 Themes of 'Descent'

i. Landscape

'People say that my fictional characters seem to emerge from the places where my stories are set'.¹⁹⁶ Du Maurier's comment suggests the important role which the theme of landscape plays in her fiction, as well as the close relationship between it and the characters. Its function is consequently significantly greater than might at first be expected. Indeed, the importance of environment in the author's own life is translated directly into the texts, allotting landscape a textual presence and power almost superseding that of the characters. In considering most aspects of her work, and in particular character development, it is therefore impossible not to accept the portrayal of landscape as a primary factor. Accordingly, it is unsurprising that it is the central theme outlining 'descent' as it relates to the secondary narrative; while indicating the imprisonment of the central identity quite clearly, it also serves to explicate the nature and context of that imprisonment. A consideration of this stage of narrative progression therefore contributes significantly to an understanding of the text itself, for the presence of two narrative progressions – of two sequences of 'descent' and 'ascent' – allows the

¹⁹⁶ Du Maurier, D., *Enchanted Cornwall: Her Pictorial Memoir*, edited by Piers Dudgeon, with photographs by Nick Wright (Harmondsworth: Michael Joseph, Pilot, 1989), p.69.

author to express ideas which may not have emerged in relation to a primary narrative level alone.

The importance of Cornwall to du Maurier has already been made a focal point of any study of the author and her work, and is indeed beyond dispute. As she herself wrote in reference to Fowey, '[t]he river, the harbour, the sea. It's much more than love for a person' (*Growing Pains*, p.112). Her love of Cornwall was to be a major force not only on her life but on her creativity too, a convergence which also doubtless directed her interest in the Brontës. Its relevance in her own life meant that it was one of, if not the most accessible idea to be used and manipulated in a fictional context. As a result, the manner in which both Cornwall and Menabilly find their way so often into her work is the most apparent instance of many parallels between fiction and life.

Before going on to look at the immense role played by landscape in this text, it should be pointed out that the setting is intricately linked with du Maurier's perception of the characters she places in it, often controlling them, rather than the reverse. Its significance on the reader's interpretation of these narrative figures is thus not to be underestimated. The fact that characters appear to alter according to their surroundings supports this view. In *My Cousin Rachel*, for instance, Philip Ashley becomes a new person somewhere between Cornwall and Florence: 'the self which had set forth upon his journey [...] existed no longer. In his place a stranger stood, dispirited and weary'.¹⁹⁷ To maintain her identity, Rachel must also literally transfer the soil of Florence, along with its native plants, to Cornwall, and create her own garden, a miniaturised home away from home. These are major instances of the manner in which landscape is implicated in narrative events, character development and metaphoric meaning, and enforce the

¹⁹⁷ *My Cousin Rachel* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1980), p.35. All quotations from *My Cousin Rachel* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

importance of its role in the text as a whole. In addition, they suggest the narrative 'descent' implicated by landscape as the identity fragments. Towards this end, the break in consciousness that signals the commencement of 'descent' is achieved, and subsequently developed, in numerous ways. In *The House on the Strand*, 'The Way of the Cross' and *Jamaica Inn*, for example, Time is used as an agent of such division. In these narratives, time-travel, an ancient map and Celtic myth respectively introduce movement between states of being by bridging the gap between past and present. *The Flight of the Falcon* likewise dramatises travel backwards through time in its choice and use of location and, like the other texts, suggests that such divisions operate in direct accordance with the Self-division of the characters concerned. While *Rebecca* often clarifies such partitioning by creating walls within the landscape, this is not always necessary; the hostility of the location in *Jamaica Inn*, for instance, eschews the need for finite barriers since the very nature of the space itself creates them.

The power of the opening sequence of *Rebecca* sets the tone for the remainder of the text, in which the narrator is to be as overwhelmed by Maxim's first wife as she is now by the landscape that is redolent of her. The strength of this here overshadows all subsequent events and establishes Manderley as the chief character and living heart of *Rebecca* the novel, as well as of Rebecca the character. A parallel opening sequence can be seen in *Frenchman's Creek*, where a daytripper is likewise trespassing through time on ground still haunted by the ghosts of past people and events. In contrast to the treatment of the daytripper of *Frenchman's Creek*, however, there is an instant affinity between the trespassing narrator of *Rebecca* and the dreamscape, an affinity which, the present study will argue, indicates her ultimate identification with Rebecca, and consequently her acquisition of wholeness through 'ascent'. It will be seen that this takes place independently of the primary narrative which refers to Maxim; the Other of the

primary narrative therefore becomes the Self of the secondary narrative, where the author's concerns can be voiced more directly. The relative disregard for the primary narrative itself is significant, and it becomes defined as lacking "truth". The Manderley that the narrator first encounters suggests an antithesis of the control she will later feel. While characters so often identify with the landscape, the narrator's sense of utter alienation from her new surroundings is given great prominence here, and signals the direction which her growth through the narrative events will take. Indeed, we have already been appraised of its success in the opening scene, in which she dreams that she is entirely at one with Manderley. Importantly, the estate is here importantly described in terms of alien space, of an exoticism that is obviously only a subjective construct of the narrator's imagination.

At this point, it is relevant to mention du Maurier's representation of racial difference in connection with the double, for it becomes, through both the description of the estate and the narrator's subsequent construction of Rebecca, an important theme. It is one that is explored early on in the author's writing career in *The Progress of Julius*, her second novel, where it constitutes the central pivot for narrative events. Although the use of the motif altered and developed a great deal in her later fiction, there are episodes here that show an early tendency to relate the theme to concepts of restriction and liberty. The novel charts the fortunes of Julius, who is of mixed race – his father Jewish and his mother French – and follows him as he establishes himself and makes his fortune in London. Focusing almost exclusively on the development of the plot, the contrast of this novel with the later fiction's concern with the inner consciousness is clear. Nevertheless, the latter half of the novel sees a shift of interest as Julius' daughter, Gabriel, enters into his life. The moment of identification with her comes when Julius sees her playing the flute, as his father had done; whereas the latter's music had sounded heavenly in his ears,

however, Gabriel's is interpreted as Satanic in its power, marking her instantly as a subversive figure. The clarity with which Julius sees the two halves of his own racial identity in her implicates race in her mysteriousness: '[w]hat an amazing thing heredity can be; you've got hands like my father's. But the rest of you is Blançard, pure Blançard.'¹⁹⁸ Gabriel is immediately defined by Julius as being his 'other self' (*PJ*, p.246), in what amounts to an early instance of the desire to assimilate the Other, an idea developed more fully in *My Cousin Rachel*. This desire is furthermore only realised at that instant when Julius witnesses his daughter's ability to create a sort of music capable of lifting the spirit to a new level of consciousness.¹⁹⁹ What du Maurier touches on here will be developed into a means of granting the character caught in the underworld freedom through another form of spiritual and imaginative transcendence: writing.

In *Rebecca*, racial Otherness is found as a covert implication of something feared which manifests itself as alien. In its association to the female identity, its prominence furthermore enhances the focus on the secondary narrative level, while defining this as subversive to traditional values. This is presented in a manner reflecting the contemporary climate in which du Maurier was writing; many have commented on the fact that she, like the narrator, was temporarily exiled from England, and that her husband's military career must necessarily have heightened her awareness of the crumbling of old values, values inherent in notions of Empire. The nostalgia running through the novel for an idealised old England can therefore be construed not only as a manifestation of the author's homesickness, but might also be read as a nostalgia for the security of Empire solidity. The tension between Foreign and Domestic is instantly

¹⁹⁸ *The Progress of Julius* (London: Heinemann, 1976), p.215. All quotations from *The Progress of Julius* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

¹⁹⁹ There are clear parallels here with the author's own family – both have a French heritage, and a granddaughter who follows the same art as her grandfather.

suggested in the location of Monte Carlo, where haunting images and rumours of Manderley are nevertheless present. The physical relocation is thus virtually a matter of course, as the narrator enters the suffocating exoticism of the estate, a microcosm of colonial Empire in its maintenance of an idealised England. Its landscape has already been fantastically depicted in the opening dream-sequence, one that introduces the estate in terms of nightmarishly deformed and aberrant humanity, of something 'stealthy' and 'insidious', encroaching 'with long, tenacious fingers', 'a menace'. There is also a sense that Man's domination has not only been overturned but is even now being actively murdered, the moss and grass 'chok[ing]' the gravel drive, the branches 'an impediment to progress'. There are clear resonances of something lost, of the Empire fallen, of 'things of culture and of grace' now transformed into abominations of 'naked limbs' and 'skeleton claws'; of civilisation 'gone native', now 'dark and uncontrolled', 'black and ugly' (*R*, p.7). There are even suggestions of hybrid breedings and 'alien marriage' (p.8), of plants and shrubs that have gained unnaturally giant dimensions, of a world divested of its proper proportion and order and sunk in chaos and corruption. The association that is built up during the course of the narrative between this landscape, as subjectively viewed by the narrator, and Rebecca, is consequently of great significance in establishing the first wife as the girl's double, or Other, a darker and more mysterious facet of herself.

Amidst this chaos, and after seemingly endless miles of woods, the house itself still stands inviolate. It is the ultimate symbol of patriarchal control, the epitome of that against which Nature has turned, for even now the tendrils of ivy creep towards it, 'and soon would encroach upon the house itself', as too will another 'half-breed' plant (p.8). Described as a structure of perfect symmetry and thus of aesthetic order, it is 'a jewel in the hollow of a hand', a remnant of imperialist rule (p.8). The mullioned windows are selectively reflective, mirroring not the anarchic wilderness that surrounds them, but only

the quiet lawns and terrace. Nature's ultimate victory is instantaneous, however, for, even as the moon vanishes for an instant behind a cloud, it emerges to reveal Manderley as a wasted hollow, lifeless and dead. From being something that 'lived and breathed', it has become 'a desolate shell, soulless at last' (pp.8, 9). In this description a direct parallel is created between the house and Maxim himself, for he is the novel's embodiment of patriarchal – and by extension and implication, imperialist – rule. Just as the living house had metamorphosed into a 'shell' when a cloud, 'like a dark hand before a face', obscured the moon, so Maxim's face also alters 'as though swept clean by an unseen hand, and in its place a mask [...] form[s], a sculptured thing, formal and cold, beautiful still but lifeless' (p.9). In the narrator's *waking* memory, conversely, Manderley exists only in its association with drinking tea, singing birds, and the rose-garden.

The estate is the implied site of subversive female sexual and regenerative power, a power which initially disturbs, even frightens, the virginal narrator, and only emerges in her subconscious. This Otherness affirms the desire of the primary narrative to draw a dividing line between Foreign and Domestic, and Reason and Imagination, as well as to impose negative connotations onto it. As these social "truths" are redefined, however, the surreal exoticism begins to encroach onto this world in waking life soon after the narrator's arrival at Manderley. This is seen when the rhododendrons so closely associated with Rebecca appear to be 'slaughterous red, luscious and fantastic, unlike any rhododendron plant I had seen before', 'they were monsters, rearing to the sky, massed like a battalion, too beautiful I thought, too powerful, they were not plants at all' (p.52). Certainly not the inhabitants of an English country garden, these plants combine all the characteristics that render Rebecca socially unacceptable in the male world; that is to say, her sexual power and strength of character, the danger of which are imparted here through the imagery of war and brutal death.

Rebecca herself is appropriately a figure closely allied with the foreign as Other, not least in her gipsy-like darkness and her transgression of the accepted female social and domestic role. Her dark hair and eyes haunt the narrator, seeming to be emblematic of her power, whereas the new bride is likened to Alice in Wonderland and Joan of Arc. Rebecca's powerfully athletic physique and daring nature do not exclude, however, the association of her dark features with a dangerously feminine seductiveness: thus her perfume lingers still in the narrator's imagination, while her glamorous dresses contrast with the latter's own. In this sense, the grounds of Manderley also become an externalisation of the narrator's repressed imagination, of that within herself which, by being socially unacceptable, manifests itself as Other. This is seen to be the case at the very moment of her arrival at the estate, when 'I became aware that this was not the drive I had imagined would be Manderley's, this was not a broad and spacious thing of gravel, flanked with neat turf at either side, kept smooth with rake and brush' (p.51); instead, it is the serpentine drive which is already suggestive of Rebecca herself. The factors contributing to the girl's alienation from the estate are consequently highlighted on her arrival there, but are ones which the reader knows will be eventually overcome when Rebecca and the narrator become one, as the present study will go on to demonstrate.

A break in consciousness is coincidental with the narrator's arrival at Manderley, for the real world appears to have been replaced by a surreal one. Accordingly, her entrance into this realm is marked by the fact that, almost immediately, '[t]he lodge gates were a memory, and the high-road something belonging to another time, another world' (p.51). Once within the grounds, the sun and wind present but a moment ago instantly vanish, and even the sound of the car engine alters, for this is a land outside time and space, with a landscape that immediately overpowers the narrator with its exaggerated strength, colour and dimensions. Following this, imagery of a 'descent' into an

underworld is immediately introduced. There are, as will be further demonstrated in the section entitled 'masquerade', clear parallels between this novel and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Northrop Frye in fact refers to Lewis Carroll's story as a narrative that clearly appropriates the romance structure. Following her actual fall, he points out that '[t]here is a good deal of alienation in Alice's world: she is never quite sure of her identity, and the continuity with her previous life is broken when her carefully memorised poems turn into grotesque parodies'.²⁰⁰ This break in consciousness, as well as the distortion of surroundings, indicates a confusion of identity in both narratives. It is this that anticipates a redefinition of perceived truths, and a transcendence of accepted values through a secondary narrative 'ascent'. Identity will be closely implicated in this process, as will be seen.

The young mistress of Manderley's homecoming is one that certainly does not reflect the newly-found social and financial freedom gained by her marriage to Maxim, but is rather an entrance into a prison. The first sight of the estate is one which highlights the walls surrounding it and, as the narrator is driven into this enclosed prison-world, we see that the woods and plants themselves are an echo of this wall, creating a seemingly impassable barrier including an actual 'blue wall' of hydrangeas, as well as a 'wall' of rhododendrons (pp.50, 51). There is a feeling that the narrator has been transported by Maxim from one sort of prison with Mrs. Van Hopper to another here when '[t]he gates had shut to with a crash behind us, the dusty high-road was out of sight' (p.51). This sense of imprisonment is sustained on arrival at the house itself, where the crowd of servants are headed by an executioner-figure, Mrs Danvers, who victimizes the newcomer in her own way. This knowledge is later voiced quite openly by the narrator,

²⁰⁰ *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), p.124.

who realises that she is treated by the housekeeper 'as though she were a warder, and I in custody' (p.70).²⁰¹ In addition, the rhododendrons associated with the first wife transfer their 'wall of colour, blood-red' from the grounds into the house, where, in Rebecca's study, the narrator feels that 'even the walls took colour from them, becoming rich and glowing in the morning sun' (pp.51, 65). There is therefore a clear relationship between the narrator's sense of imprisonment and her perception of Rebecca; the double manifest in 'descent' and accompanied by restriction is hence made apparent through du Maurier's use of landscape here. The girl's failure to be at one with her world – her lack of 'wholeness' – is attributed to a suppression (or imprisoning) of some aspect of her identity. This fragmentation of identity, one characterized by her desire for a sense of integration that is denied by social rule, anticipates a wholeness by 'ascent' as the Self is reconstructed independently of social impositions.

The nature of this suppression is furthermore indicated by the partitioning of the estate, for the narrator is not only literally suffocated by the dimensions of this space, but is also metaphorically cornered within the landscape and given the rose-garden which is here the symbol of social order. Being allotted a room in the east wing, the polar opposite of the location of Rebecca's quarters, and much lighter than its eerie counterpart, the garden which the narrator's room overlooks is also included within this set of antitheses. Whereas Rebecca's apartments in the west wing look out to the sea, an emblem of the uncontainable and uncontrollable, as well as that which holds secrets within the plot, the east wing oversees the rose-garden which is Maxim's particular joy:

²⁰¹ The housekeeper's name, an uncommon one, was perhaps a result of Stevenson's influence. In 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde', Hyde violently murders an elderly gentleman, Sir Danvers Carew.

'I love the rose-garden', he said; 'one of the first things I remember is walking after my mother, on very small, unsteady legs, while she picked off the dead heads of the roses. There's something peaceful and happy about this room, and it's quiet too. You could never tell you were within five minutes of the sea, from this room'. (p.59)

The suggestion here is that this garden is a symbol of Man's control over and cultivation of nature for his own purposes; Maxim's linking of it in memory with the safety of his mother domesticates and demystifies it, in stark contrast to the threat and untamed wilderness of the estate beyond, which is ever felt to be on the brink of retaliation against Man. Thus the desire to possess and contain the narrator in a similar manner is exposed – she must continue in the tradition of wife and mother, kept not only out of sight but also out of hearing of the tumultuous sea and its secrets. Consequently, it is only following the narrator's knowledge of the truth concerning Rebecca's death that these roses begin to droop and die. In Doctor Baker's house, *Roselands*, mistaken by a passer-by for *Rose Cottage*, and outside which a barrel organist plays '*Roses of Picardy*', we are shown this idealised life. Baker, a reputable man in a reputable profession, plays tennis with his sons outside, while the only glimpse of the woman whom we, like the narrator, assume to be Mrs. Baker is only to be seen in an unidentified portrait, and the back of an anonymous woman's head resting on a deck-chair. Yet even here, Colonel Julyan voices the desire to keep out the unruly: '[l]ook at those shrubs tumbling over his wall. They ought to have been pruned right back' (p.266).

It is made patently clear through the use of division within the landscape that those qualities which are being actively repressed in the narrator are closely related to those socially undesirable elements within the landscape. Her subjective view of the

Manderley estate therefore becomes in some fashion a view of Rebecca herself: the drive cutting through it is referred to as a 'ribbon' (p.51), while the scent which overpowers her is mimicked on Rebecca's handkerchief. It is therefore hardly surprising that the rhododendrons which are particularly associated with the previous mistress are 'not plants at all' (p.52). In retrospect, Rebecca is seen more clearly as having lived in the narrator's mind *as* and *through* this aspect of Manderley:

when the leaves rustle, they sound very much like the stealthy movement of a woman in evening dress, and when they shiver suddenly, and fall, and scatter away along the ground, they might be the patter, patter, of a woman's hurrying footstep, and the mark in the ground the imprint of a high-heeled satin shoe.
(p.12)

It is the narrator's enclosure within this landscape that, through enacting her narrative 'descent', reveals her fragmented identity by presenting it as an external being. The construction of Rebecca, based largely on a perception of this landscape, then, becomes an embodiment of the narrator's Other, her double made apparent in this underworld of constraint.

Just as the characters of the narrator and Rebecca are by implication part of a whole, the divisions between Foreign and Domestic within the landscape of Manderley, while they oppose each other, are nevertheless regarded as sharing a common quality. The dividing factor in this case is shown to be the restricting distortion and control which is enacted against one – a 'pruning back' of certain qualities. Such a division is also evident in the Venice of 'Don't Look Now' which, as an antithesis of itself, suggests a possible reason for du Maurier's choice of the city as a 'ready-made' setting:

In the daytime, with the sun's reflection on the water and the windows of the houses open, bedding upon the balconies, a canary singing in a cage, there had been an impression of warmth, of secluded shelter. Now, ill-lit, almost in darkness, the windows of the houses shuttered, the water dank, the scene appeared altogether different, neglected, poor, and the long, narrow boats moored to the slippery steps of cellar entrances looked like coffins.²⁰²

Like Venice, Manderley can assume both of these qualities, at least subjectively, and a gradual identification with what had been perceived as the dark landscape marks the development of the "rose-garden" narrator. This is a clear method by which the narrator's 'ascent' is indicated, although it is not the means through which it is achieved. It is clear that a re-evaluation of the truth instituted by the views of the primary narrative must be undertaken to reach this end, for it is only then that the Self can be reconstructed.

A clearer analogy between landscape and the double is presented in *Frenchman's Creek*, where the idea of the two gardens is also important. Dona's supposed freedom from society's demands in her own garden is here proven to be merely illusory; she will taste true liberty, however, in its counterpart, the area surrounding the creek where the pirate ship is harboured. Just as landscape defines, through the narrator and Rebecca, restriction and a fragmentation of identity, the two "gardens" here also reflect the social imprisonment imposed on Dona:

She had consented to be the Dona her world had demanded – a superficial, lovely creature, who walked, and talked, and laughed, accepting praise and

²⁰² In *Not After Midnight and Other Stories* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1971), p.21. All quotations from

admiration with a shrug of the shoulder as natural homage to her beauty, careless, insolent, deliberately indifferent, and all the while another Dona, a strange, phantom Dona, peered at her from a dark mirror and was ashamed.

(pp.16-17)

This splitting of identity followed by a sense of liberation is represented in a more obvious form in the short story 'The Pool', where a girl's physical development is charted in her desire to be isolated in a forest adjoining the family garden, and her entrance into a new world on the other side of a pool, the surface of which, mirror-like, acts as a gateway between these two worlds through a break in consciousness. This suggests that a dissociation from realism is therefore required in the anticipated 'ascent' of the narrator on a secondary narrative level, as she seeks to break out of her underworld of restraint.

A subjective perspective is seen to be an integral part of the relationship between these two divided regions of the landscape/character, and is vital in portraying the change that takes place in the narrative consciousness. Although such a shift is made manifestly clear in 'The Pool', it also applies to the other texts, where its presence is only slightly more veiled. In *Rebecca*, it is suggested through the Edenic connotations of the rose-garden, which, as in Collins' *The Moonstone*, is man-made and guarded from the outside world by walls, an entirely artificial construct. As in Collins' novel, however, we see that all attempts to maintain this sanctity and purity are in vain, for the subversion interpreted by the patriarchal order as corruption already exists *within* the enclosed and supposedly domesticated space. The predominance of dreams and the dream-consciousness in *Rebecca* furthermore indicates that the narrative 'descent' is merely a recognition of a condition which has long been present in latent form, an acquisition of knowledge

already inherent. The Edenic rose-garden associated by Maxim with his mother, and by extension with the first mother, is already surrounded by a landscape possessing stronger transgressive powers, and the "snake" which will lead the young and innocent narrator to a state of knowledge. For Rebecca, as Ben points out, 'gave you the feeling of a snake' (p.115), an analogy which, in her physical absence, is superimposed onto the landscape: on the newlyweds' arrival at Manderley, the narrator consequently notices how the drive 'twisted and turned as a serpent'; and again, 'this drive that was no drive twisted and turned like an enchanted ribbon' (p.52), signaling a link between Rebecca's provocative femininity and the bewitching power of the woods. The idealised – and feminised – space is clearly one that has been formulated and constructed by the primary narrative, and constitutes the female identity's underworld. The distortion and "corruption" of this "ideal" space consequently relates itself to her recognition of the artificiality of this region, and is therefore implicated in the desire for truth. This will be achieved within the narrative structure by the female identity's 'ascent', one that will liberate her from imposed and false perceptions. The issue that is seen to be intricately linked with her confinement is hence identified as a subversive female energy counterproductive to patriarchal power. It is this fact, indeed, that leads Rebecca to be demonised as Other, a characterisation that emanates from a source of patriarchal insularity.

A similar viewpoint is presented in *Frenchman's Creek* when the stuffy Lord Godolphin observes of the French pirate that 'these foreigners are half women, you know. *You never know what they are thinking*' (p.253, my italics). Again, *My Cousin Rachel* forthrightly links the corruption of moral values with the Foreign, which is likewise demonised. While Rebecca is created as Other largely through connotations of foreignness, Rachel is Italian, a fact around which the (first person male) narrative

revolves. Central to this is the uncertainty of both narrator and reader as to the true character and intentions of the title figure, an uncertainty that remains unresolved. This of course also implies the transfer of the narrator – Philip's – own insecurities onto Rachel, as is made clear through the nature of his expectations shortly before their meeting, when he "creates" her as 'large-featured', 'monstrous', 'pale and drawn', 'middle-aged and forceful', 'simpering and young' (*MCR*, p.28). These descriptions, apart from expressing a need to categorise the Unknown, formulate this desire into ideas built around misogynistic perceptions of various local women with whom Philip has contemptuously avoided closer relationships. These incongruous images of Rachel also highlight the fact that her identity is non-fixed in the narrator's view, and the fact that it will remain so has perhaps also been predetermined here. What is of particular interest is the persona which Philip decides best befits her – that of monster – one which he constructs during the course of his journey to Italy, and which is thus immediately identified as being related to Rachel as a foreigner:

since my journey to the villa she had become a monster, larger than life itself.

Her eyes were black as sloes, her features aquiline like Rainaldi's, and she moved about those musty villa rooms sinuous and silent, like a snake. (p.58)

Monster, snake, and the features of the only Italian he has met thus far combine to create the would-be Rachel, with the first two of these apparently inherent in her gender for, much as he dislikes Rainaldi, no such parallels are made in regard to him. This suggests that the false construction of Rachel's identity is based solely on the patriarch's fear of the threat which, as a female and a foreigner, she poses to him. The underworld of the secondary narrative is therefore determined by the insecurities and safeguards of the

primary narrative, setting the two in conflict. Horner and Zlosnik observe that the female is connected to the Foreign in this way in order to emphasise the *male* perspective of Woman which the author wishes to portray, a view upheld by Rachel's refusal to fill the domestic role of wife and mother in the traditional manner, to her detriment. The perspective created by the male narrator in this case is consequently undercut by the presence of a *female* perspective, and the narrative identification is gradually transferred from one to the other.

Philip's images of Rachel are to be blasted when he finds the antithesis of his mind's fabrications in the pleasant and alluring widow. Her beauty and charm nevertheless contribute to the danger she poses, for now it is her *intentions* which must be monstrous and evil, a conviction that takes increasing hold of Philip's mind. He is aware from the first of his ability to see only a single facet of Rachel's character, one sufficiently enchanting to obscure from sight, if not from suspicion, the others that he has decided must surely lurk in Woman's nature:

somewhere there was a bitter creature, crabbed and old, hemmed about with lawyers; somewhere a larger Mrs. Pascoe, loud-voiced, arrogant; somewhere a petulant spoilt doll, with corkscrew curls; somewhere a viper, sinuous and silent. But none of them was with me in this room. (p.93)

The danger concealed behind a seemingly innocuous exterior is similarly depicted in 'The Birds', where people's first suspicions are that the attacking birds must come from abroad.

In *Rebecca*, the narrator's dissociation from Rebecca – that is to say, the manifestation of her double through the fragmentation of identity – is expressed in terms

of the Fall, an underscoring of the narrative 'descent' now taking place. This scheme begins with Maxim's proposal, during which he feeds the narrator pieces of a tangerine. Only when the arrangement is complete does she realise that it 'was very sour. I had a sharp, bitter taste in my mouth, and I had only just noticed it' (p.44). The parallel to Eve's fall continues as the thought of Maxim's proposal to Rebecca arises in the narrator's mind, '[a] thought unbidden, prompted by demons. Get thee behind me, Satan' (p.46). The narrator's position in the underworld at this point, and her dissociation from Rebecca as her double, are seen to be desirable to Maxim, for, when she imagines Rebecca in her place at dinner, he observes that she does not look like herself, but older, deceitful, as well as having 'a twist to [her] mouth and a flash of knowledge in [her] eyes. Not the right sort of knowledge' (p.148). Such a perspective sets the primary and secondary narratives in conflict with each other, showing the security of the primary narrative to be based upon the suppression of its counterpart. The narrator's relationship with Rebecca is anticipated, however, and the two identities eventually merge to achieve wholeness, as this chapter will go on to show. This will become clearer as the theme of writing is introduced within the narrative as an expression of the disconnectedness of the Self, and finally as a means of unifying these disjunct fragments.

ii. Animals

In this section, the present study will attempt to show that many of the ideas which du Maurier generates through her presentation of landscape are paralleled by the treatment of animals in her fiction. The pattern of narrative 'descent' is upheld by the identification of the central identity – in the case of *Rebecca*, the narrator – with an animal. This is important in locating the position of the female identity in a narrative underworld, and clarifying the reasons for this. Firstly, however, certain episodes recounted by du Maurier

herself will help to expound some of the ideas with which animals, and particularly birds, are associated. This will enable their inclusion in her fiction to be read in a more complete context, that is to say, to be seen not only as an aid in effecting 'descent', but also in highlighting certain concerns which she later attempts to overcome within the narrative.

It is clear that du Maurier sought to express her own condition through the lives of animals, tamed and wild, about her. This identification is made particularly apparent in *Vanishing Cornwall*, which opens with a childhood memory of the setting free of her two pet doves, Wendy and Peter. This is an episode which Horner and Zlosnik link to du Maurier's use of bird-imagery in conjunction with Cornwall and freedom. '[Peter] had been the first to go because some Never-Never-Land lay beyond Bookham Common; it could be that even now he was winging his way to Cornwall'.²⁰³ Du Maurier's own identification with Barrie's character was such that she was often called Peter, and invariably landed the part when the children acted out the play, which she knew by heart. It was about this time that there was talk, as she remembers, of the children visiting Cornwall, where this Peter too was to find freedom and her own 'Never-Never-Land'. Du Maurier thus suggests that she too is caged, and that her consciousness of this fact was accentuated in the open countryside of Cornwall: passing over the Tamar Bridge, and told to shut her eyes, she peeks and notices only the 'iron bars' of the railway bridge (*Vanishing Cornwall*, p.12). She later acknowledges that the lifestyles of both herself and her sisters had been such as to create a protective cage around them:

²⁰³Du Maurier, D., *Vanishing Cornwall*, with photographs by Christian Browning (London: Victor Gollancz, 1981), prologue, p.11. All quotations from *Vanishing Cornwall* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

we were all ready for adventure, but the cage imprisoned us. The cage, indeed, was all we knew. Ours was the sanded floor, the seed, the water, even the rod on which to perch, the swing to make us gay. We were cherished, loved, protected.

(p.13)

It was in Cornwall that Daphne was to experience freedom, and animals, and most often birds, are repeatedly employed by her as an external sign of a character's physical and emotional welfare in this sense. The manner in which she empathizes with the lives of these creatures, applying it to her own circumstances, is one thus resulting in a more meaningful inclusion of animals in her fiction in relation to imprisonment and liberty.

In her most famous novel, *Manderley* itself constitutes an imprisoning cage, within which the narrator's faithful and unquestioning naiveté is typified in a continuing parallel to the young household dog. 'Animal companions are frequent in descent themes, as part of the pattern of metamorphosis', and Jasper is indeed soon accompanying the narrator wherever she goes.²⁰⁴ This fact emphasises her personality, and the manner in which it is perceived by others, as docile, domestic, and passive, whilst also sharpening the contrast with the serpent to which the sexually attractive Rebecca has already been likened. It is soon forgotten that there are in fact two dogs, with the mother, blind in one eye, remaining dedicated to the first mistress, a dedication reenacted by Maxim's own mother, who is also virtually blind. The connection of the narrator to a pet, and more particularly to a dog, is first established, however, when still in the service of Mrs. Van Hopper, whom she had been compelled to follow, 'trotting in her wake like a shadow, drab and dumb' (*R*, p.48). She will soon be installed anew as the loyal and 'dumb' companion in *Manderley*, to which she is taken as a new form of prisoner. This transfer

²⁰⁴ Frye, p.115.

is presented as a kind of sacrificial rite, for on the couple's approach to Manderley, Maxim calls her a '[p]oor lamb' (p.50), an endearment he is to repeat. This sense of helplessness is inferred again with another animal analogy when the narrator feels that she is being assessed and examined by all about her as if she were a 'prize cow', just as, previously, Mrs. Van Hopper had also 'run[] her eyes over my points like a judge at a cattle show' (pp.107, 47).

The most consistent analogy, however, remains that with Jasper, with whom she feels she holds an equal place in Maxim's heart; both are ignored and patted on the head in turn. This imprisonment within a given identity is repeated in *My Cousin Rachel* when Philip Ashley presents Rachel with a pearl collar. In *Rebecca*, however, such references are used as a means of emphasising the narrator's frustrated helplessness and ignorance of the truth, as well as isolating her from her fellow humans. Even her sketching, scorned by the bishop's wife, is called a 'little talent' – a phrase which, the narrator observes in a play on words, 'sounded like a pet disease' (p.94). It is significant, therefore, that soon after she learns the truth about Rebecca's death, Captain Julyan comments that Jasper has grown into a nice-looking dog, while Maxim observes that the narrator has grown up and left her youth for dead (p.220). The dissociation of her from youthful unknowing is confirmed not only by the cessation of this analogy, but by its application now to Maxim, who in his turmoil is held and comforted by his wife as if he had been Jasper, coming to her when injured. This is a sure sign of the 'ascent' that is even now taking place with the narrator's increasing identification with Rebecca. In addition, this process is shown to necessitate a reversal of power within the narrative from one located on a primary level to one located on a secondary level. In a similar manner, *The King's General* also makes such a connection, when Dick Grenville, literally walled up in a tunnel for his own

safety, emerges to be fed, and, like a puppy, 'licked the bones with little pointed teeth and tore at the strips of flesh with small, eager paws'.²⁰⁵

The unveiled parallels to animals that the author draws in these texts make the perhaps more subtle references to imprisonment within the theme of landscape a more overt concern here. In this respect, it is notable that her criticism of such restrictions within the social norm is inferred strictly through analogies to *domestic* animals. The choice of birds is therefore an interesting one in its diversity, yet one that is nevertheless predominantly suggestive of a need and desire for liberation from the present condition. A good example of the importance of this motif to the author's art and ideas is seen in *The Flight of the Falcon*, where it is central to the plot as well as to the emotional circumstances of the hero. In this story of two brothers, the present is paralleled with past historical events through location, here an Italian university town. The tale of the Duke – the 'Falcon' – is related to the narrator by his brother on the turret of the ducal palace, the very spot where the story had culminated when the Duke had been tempted by the Devil; then '[h]e spread his arms [...] and flew. His arms were wings, he had become a bird. He soared over the rooftops and the city was his, and the people stared up at him in wonder'.²⁰⁶

Having set the scene for the events of the narrative, the novel takes up these associations. Returning to the town in adulthood after many years of absence, for instance, Armino, the narrator, notices that the falcon emblem above the palace doorway which had appeared so menacing now hints only at freedom (*FF*, p.44). The qualities that he had associated with this bird, however, have also long been connected with his

²⁰⁵ *The King's General* (London: Arrow Books, 1992), p.168. All quotations from *The King's General* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

²⁰⁶ *The Flight of the Falcon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1981), p.18. All quotations from *The Flight of the Falcon* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

brother. As children, they would enact the scene of a painting in a local church, Armino playing the role of Lazarus, and Aldo taking the role of Christ or the Devil, 'for according to Aldo's ingenious theory the two were one, and also, in some manner which he never explained, interchangeable' (p.16). Like Lazarus or the risen Christ, Aldo returns from the dead, and bird-references continue throughout the text: Armino, for instance, speaks of himself as 'a bird of passage' (p.94), while the courtship banter between Aldo and his mistress is the 'ritual flight before the final act' (p.125). The motif becomes, however, increasingly associated with the desire to free the Self. Consequently, when informed of his mother's death, Armino feels glad, and, at that instant, a bird also appears in the line of his vision which, instead of diving, soars and circles ever higher. Similarly, he watches as a group of orphans are given leave by a nun to go to the shore, and, 'suddenly released and free, ran with uplifted arms towards the sea' (p.239), a precedent of Aldo's final moments. All remain, however, in a state of imprisonment, or 'descent', the ultimate form of which is death.²⁰⁷

It is in the crescendo of the final scene that these references culminate, with its analogies of flight and freedom as well as its climax of a repetition by Aldo of the Duke's death. The brothers attempt to erase the passage of time in a reenactment of the Duke's final ride through the town, itself a kind of flight in which the charioteers flirt with death, surrounded by crowds 'with upraised hands sounding as they clapped like the fluttering of innumerable wings' (p.261). When the narrator has climbed the turret, a huge bird-figure appears to his blurred vision, wings outspread, in what turns out to be a mechanical construction designed to carry Aldo over the city. The design of the apparatus is even based upon the wings of a falcon. Religious imagery becomes blatant now, as '[s]pread-eagled thus, [Aldo] appeared to [his brother] helpless, even grotesque.

²⁰⁷ Frye, p.110.

He would never free himself from the lashings that encompassed him. The fibre, black beneath the silver, looked like nails' (p.269). This grotesqueness is transformed, however, into a vision of loveliness and splendour in the younger brother's eyes as the 'Falcon' leaps off the turret, then, struggling free of the apparatus, spreads his own arms wide before plummeting to the earth in a repetition of his first presumed death in a bomber plane. Here once again, this theme, like that of landscape, can only confirm the desire and necessity for a sense of freedom, yet the narrator is at this stage fixed in a state of 'descent', as the images of plummeting and falling suggest.

Although established as a symbol of sought-after freedom through the historical/religious angle taken in *The Flight of the Falcon*, du Maurier had already employed the bird-motif in earlier works in a less marked manner. Just as Jane Eyre hears 'the rushing of wings' when she is locked in the red-room and falls unconscious, its use in du Maurier's fiction also remains one which refers predominantly to the position of a central identity who is held captive in some fashion.²⁰⁸ *Frenchman's Creek* and *The King's General* are both instances of this, with du Maurier expressing at least some of her own feelings through the two heroines. Indeed, Dona St. Columb voices the author's own emotions, as referred to in *Vanishing Cornwall*, when she tries to explain to her husband how she feels. Recalling her father's aviary, she tells how she once set a linnet free and watched as it flew towards the sun. 'Because I feel like that. Like the linnet before it flew' (FC, p.23). Her husband's utter inability to comprehend this places him in a position of opposition to the female's need for freedom. It is little wonder, in the light of this, that Jean-Benoit Aubéry, the Frenchman through whose company Dona experiences freedom, is a pirate whose ship is called 'La Mouette', the seagull.²⁰⁹ Images

²⁰⁸ *Jane Eyre*, p.49.

²⁰⁹ Aubery was a name which George du Maurier thought belonged to his aristocratic ancestors. Although

of and references to various species of bird become increasingly profuse as Dona moves towards a state of complete independence from family, position, responsibility, and indeed socially imposed identity: seagulls clamour around the ship, the crew of which also use gull cries as warning signals; Dona's gradual recognition of the song of different varieties of bird; the multitude of species spotted in the creek; the Frenchman's drawings of them; even the plotting of his escape in the presence of his captors by references to gulls and feathers. There are in addition open comparisons between the freedom which these birds symbolise and that which Dona herself seeks: '[i]t is rather strange', she remarks, '[...] that before I came to Navron I thought very little about birds' (p.89). In talking of Dona's final choice of lifestyle, women are indeed deemed by the pirate to be 'more primitive than men. For a time they will wander, yes, and play at love, and play at adventure. And then, like the birds do, they must make their nest. Instinct is too strong for them' (p.163). Although this is without doubt one example of why du Maurier repeatedly referred to this novel as excessively romantic – 'a romance with a big R!' – and 'frivolous',²¹⁰ it is also an important indicator that this motif, while exemplifying freedom, does not supply it, as Dona's agreement with Aubéry on this point confirms. Her 'ascent' is then indeed only a temporary one. It is important, however, that this has been based upon a liberation of identity that challenges social acceptance, and is closely related to imaginative freedom. This will take a clearer form in the theme of writing as an agent of secondary narrative 'ascent'.

The relevance of the bird-motif to narrative structure is also clear in *The King's General*. In her disregard for social proprieties, and indeed her physical disability, the heroine, Honor Harris, becomes a narrator acting within as well as without the

the Aubery family had existed, his belief was false. At the time of writing *Frenchman's Creek*, however, Daphne du Maurier also thought that Aubery was her ancestral name.

established system, a position which ultimately gives her the ability to see things clearly while also allowing her to become a figure of some authority. It is her physical alteration that marks the beginning of this change, and which is represented by, as well as being caused by, falconry. The importance of birds in the text, however, has already been suggested by this stage in numerous references: Honor's fear of the bloody hawks, her sickness from eating roast swan, and the emblems (eagles, swallows and swan) on the flags of a fleet coming into harbour. The emphasis on falconry in the text is used as a reflection of the civil war, as well as being indicative of the ruthlessness of some of the characters. The King's General and his sister Gartred are two such, and it is when, against her will, she is riding after the hawks with them that Honor is crippled. Competing their hawks against each other, the hunted heron's ungainliness is echoed when Honor loses control of her horse. Gartred's tiercel soon reaches the heron, and as the two birds fall together ahead of her, Honor's horse gallops up to and into a chasm, while 'out of the sky fell the dying heron and the blood-bespattered falcon, straight into the yawning crevice that opened up before me' (*KG*, p.54). Completing this direct analogy, '[t]he Honor that was, had died as surely as the heron that afternoon in May, when the falcon slew him' (p.56).

The imagery of birds becomes one that is linked with hunting and bloodshed, even savagery, as the occupants of Menabilly themselves become the hunted quarry of war. The increasing relation of birds with violence sustains the association of the motif with persecution and helplessness. Notable instances of this are Philip Ashley's attempt to strangle Rachel, who is at that moment described as being a captive bird in his hands. The relationship between birds and violence and imprisonment finds its most extreme form, however, in the short story 'The Birds', with its continuous war-imagery and

²¹⁰ Forster, pp.162, 167.

claustrophobia. These creatures may be read as 'the ultimate incarnation of the dove of freedom',²¹¹ and do indeed exemplify a reversal of the balance of power. The parallel of them with women is never directly implied, although the narrator, on the morning following the first attack, hears his daughter 'chattering' upstairs, and finds the farmer's wife singing to herself.²¹² The manner in which du Maurier has applied the theme in other works, as already outlined, makes this association highly likely. As the ending of 'The Birds' shows, this association is not fully developed, nor is a satisfying dénouement presented, and du Maurier concentrates on the presentation of the 'descent' into an underworld itself to create and heighten the reader's sense of horror.

This anticlimax is echoed in Honor Harris' failure to truly achieve the independence and freedom which her character seeks. This is implied when Honor – whose strength is increasingly contrasted with that of her lover and his important role in the war – must resort to spurning public opinion and behaving like a boy. She thus becomes a follower of camp, '[a] pursuivant of the drum' (*KG*, p.223). There is a false assurance in this conclusion, however, for we have already witnessed a similar situation in *Frenchman's Creek*, where Dona realises that the only solution to her circumstances is not to disguise herself as, but to *become and live as* a boy. The impossibility of this here also anticipates its failure in *The King's General*. This suggests that a narrative 'ascent' is not possible for the subversive female identity on a *primary* narrative level. She must therefore seek another means of accessing her freedom.

By assessing the manner in which the themes of landscape and animals operate to effect a narrative 'descent', a conflict has been identified between the primary and secondary narrative levels, whereby the female identity is seen to be fixed in an

²¹¹ Horner and Zlosnik, p.67.

²¹² In *The Apple Tree: A Short Novel and Some Stories* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1952), pp.91, 93.

underworld created by the values of the primary consciousness. The "truth" instituted by the primary narrative has been placed in question as the identity of the Other is demystified; the shift that has consequently taken place towards a secondary narrative perspective anticipates the acknowledgement of this Other as a component of the Self made whole. Thus, an alternative to disguise is suggested in *The King's General* in Honor's compulsion to ease her spirit by writing the narrative, an idea which, although not developed here, is implemented in far greater depth in *Rebecca*. While the identification or association of the central identity with an animal or animals is, like landscape, central in illustrating a narrative 'descent', as this section has shown, it is writing which becomes a potential means of reversing this situation.

4.3 Themes of 'Ascent'

i. Writing

It is clear that the themes of landscape and identification with animals have been used by du Maurier to create a sense of narrative confinement relating to the protagonist on a secondary narrative level. The increasing need for a reversal of this condition is finally resolved, as this section will argue, by the theme of writing, one that is given far more attention here than in Wilkie Collins' fiction in this context. By examining the importance of writing in du Maurier's own life, it has already been determined to be a factor closely allied to perceptions of freedom.

Firstly, however, it is relevant to mention the diverse literary instances that have made use of the theme of writing to highlight some aspect of constraint, in particular as it refers to the female identity. Susan Gubar's study ' "The Blank Page" and Female Creativity' gives a good idea of the numerous texts which have connected women with writing to illustrate one particular point; in them, women are symbolically blank pages to

be written on by the male pen. Gubar gives instances ranging from Shakespeare's *Othello*, Henry James' *Portrait of a Lady*, and Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* to Conrad's *Victory*, Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, whilst also mentioning the critical interest in this subject, including that of David Lodge, Derrida, Pound and Barthes. All of which confirm, she argues, that 'the female body has been feared for its power to articulate itself' (p.76).²¹³ This, indeed, is seen quite clearly in *The Woman in White*, with its emphasis on captivity and anxieties about procreativity. In this respect, the theme is an interesting choice in du Maurier's fiction, for the actual *act* of writing has largely been established as a male one, with the body of the text feminised in its passivity. In transferring the author's own gender identity crisis onto the theme here, the act of writing becomes the conceptualized means of overriding the "female" persona (text) through the act of inscription, and thus reaching a state of masculinised empowerment.

The personal significance of writing in du Maurier's life is considered relevant in the present context to an examination of its meaning *within* her work. Personal problems and relationships were outlined and therapeutically worked through within a text, often resulting in feelings of relief as of a problem solved; referring to her literary creativity, she observed that the Self must '[a]ct God [...] and, by doing this, work out the unconscious strife within and be reconciled' (*Growing Pains*, p.65). Consequently, there are often close parallels between fiction and life: the narrator of *Rebecca*, for instance, was based largely on herself, as was perhaps Rebecca too, while *Manderley* is a mixture of Menabilly and the family house in Milton, and so on. That the author empathised with her characters, and in particular her narrators, is apparent in the similarity of their thoughts and feelings: becoming aware, for example, of the germ of a story, the author

²¹³ In *Writing and Sexual Difference*, p.76.

claimed that 'I knew that I must write it down and rid my system of it',²¹⁴ while such working out of internal unrest is closely echoed by Honor Harris, who in setting down the events taking place in *The King's General*, 'would rid myself of a burden' (p.14).

These feelings are grounded and made clear when du Maurier, who had long exhibited an interest in the psychology of duality, discovered the works of Jung and Adler on the subject in 1954, and immediately applied their theories to her own sense of inner division. Forster recognises that what the author 'identified with most closely in Jung was his explanation that each person has dual aspects within him- or herself, their No.1 and No.2 self'.²¹⁵ She goes on to show how directly du Maurier applied this information to herself, accepting it as scientific confirmation of what she had realised for a long time, and writing to her daughter that there were indeed two personalities within her, and that one of these, her 'No.2', was a boy, and was in addition directly associated with her writing. Consequently, when she wrote, as she explained, she was entirely this 'No.2', whereas when not writing, 'No.2' caused her endless trouble by forcing her to pretend to be someone she was not. Forster even argues that the author's fear in later life of losing her writing abilities was synonymous with the fear that there should be no outlet for this 'No.2' persona, and that finally, the loss of her creativity led directly to her decline.²¹⁶

The manner in which du Maurier describes her writing persona as a boy whose identity is and yet is not her own is distinctly reminiscent of Stevenson's Brownies – the beings who "created" his fiction to a degree of excellence he felt himself incapable of, yet who remained an inherent part of the author. While du Maurier, like Stevenson, stresses

²¹⁴ *The Rendezvous and Other Stories* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1980), preface, p.8.

²¹⁵ Forster, p.276.

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.416.

the subconscious dimension by associating the theme with dreams,²¹⁷ she clouds the central issue somewhat by applying her own gender conflict to it. The connection between her own creative freedom and writing and her male persona thus finds its way into the text, where the ambiguities of gender identity are often confusing. George du Maurier had similarly introduced a link between gender and creativity in both *Trilby* and *The Martian*: the talent of Trilby can only be released through Svengali, while the Martian is given expression through Barty. His grand-daughter, although certainly for different reasons, also describes a yearning for the "boyhood" that she equates with creative liberty; thus the idealised Rebecca is boyish, while the narrator, already described in pre-pubescent terms, longs to be Maxim's 'boy' (R, p.195). Other instances include an episode during which the narrator mistakes Mrs. Danvers for Maxim, while Maxim's mother, too, is merely a version of himself when old and blind. Although the presence of these ambiguities indicates that the writer translates the ideal in terms of masculinity, this is neither fully nor consistently worked through, often resulting in a detraction from the primary concern of the acquisition of liberty itself.

The relationship between writing and gender is one which has already been seen in *The Woman in White*, where the virtually androgynous Marian struggles to define herself through writing in a masculine context. The second shift of consciousness that is a signal of 'ascent' on a secondary narrative level is quite clearly implied in Marian's trance, one in which, like an author of fiction, she is allowed access to an entirely different – male – world, a glimpse of that which lies beyond the borders of ordinary sight. A not unreasonable reading of this in reference to Freud's essay, 'Creative Writing

²¹⁷ The dissociation of the Self from the "real" world that du Maurier relates to creativity is reminiscent of Charlotte Brontë's habit of writing with her eyes shut. In *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf also images writing as a construct that may be best perceived with eyes closed: 'If one shuts one's eyes and thinks of the novel as a whole, [...] it is a structure leaving a shape on the mind's eye, built now in squares, now pagoda-shaped, now throwing out wings and arcades, now solidly compact and domed like the

and Day-Dreaming', is that of an enactment of wish-fulfillment, of Marian's desire for adventure inspired by her knowledge of Hartright's trip to Central America. A similar instance is seen in *Frenchman's Creek*, where Dona's entry into the world of fantasy occurs while she is supposedly lying in her chamber, ill and feverish; in fact she is masquerading as the pirate's cabin-boy and reveling in her new-found liberty. The concept of license accompanied by altered consciousness is confirmed by Jean's realisation that she must soon awaken and remember only faintly the 'dream' she has had (*FC*, p.162). Just as Marian's dream is an escape-route from her expected role, du Maurier has also used this as a departure from duty – in *Frenchman's Creek* that of motherhood. Dona's recollections of an episode in childhood already suggest this, as she watched her father and brothers ride away 'with resentful eyes, a doll thrown aside on the floor in disgust' (p.132). That this is a displacement of the author's own anxieties and an envisioning of the method of her own escape from them through writing is clear, just as Honor Harris is compelled to write down her experiences in order to soothe the 'violence' of her thoughts (*KG*, p.15). The secondary narrative 'ascent' is thus seen to function in a manner antagonistic to the life of the primary narrative, and finds its truest form in the creativity of writing. It is only then that the fragmented female identity can achieve a sense of wholeness based upon a redefinition of truth and values.

Both the written and the spoken word within narrative events are of great importance in driving the plot of *Rebecca* forward. Although, like Collins, du Maurier also defines the patriarchal order as being challenged by female expression, the theme is presented by her, as the present study will illustrate, in a somewhat different manner. The act of writing in *Rebecca* is from the point of its introduction strongly implicated in a questioning and finally an assertion of identity, and it is therefore significant that the

narrator remains nameless throughout the novel. Du Maurier's portrayal of Mrs. Van Hopper is one which early on reflects the importance of nomenclature in the text, and its relationship to the written word:

Though titles were preferred by her, any face once seen in a social paper served well. Names scattered in a gossip column, authors, artists, actors and their kind, even the mediocre ones, as long as she had learnt of them in print. (*R*, p.17)

Although, during the course of the novel, the narrator undertakes all of the above-named activities – writing, drawing and acting – her obscurity, almost invisibility, in the social world typified by Monte Carlo originates from an absence of identity that is signalled by her namelessness. The female's 'ascent' will work to reverse this signifier of her restriction. This is purposely highlighted by the author when the narrator receives a note from Maxim at the hotel. Apologising for his rudeness, it bears neither formal address nor signature, for the male figure around whom the text revolves has no need of asserting his identity; the narrator, like the reader, instantly recognises who the writer of the note is. It is here that the girl begins to gain some form of existence by being identified and treated as an individual, as is affirmed by the presence of her name on the envelope, 'and spelt correctly, an unusual thing' (p.20).

It is not Maxim's writing, however, that will dominate the narrative, but his late wife's, a fact corroborated by the handwriting itself: whereas Maxim has 'scrawled' (p.20) his note, Rebecca's script is altogether different, arresting the narrator's thoughts and constituting the formative seed for her mental construction of Rebecca the person. It is 'a curious, slanting hand [...] the tall and sloping R dwarfing the other letters' (p.29). It is no coincidence that Rebecca's writing soon becomes increasingly distorted in the narrator's

eyes, and pregnant with purely subjective meaning, a sign of the fantasies that the narrator will weave around her limited knowledge of the first wife. At this stage, however, Rebecca has only just come to life through her writing; [h]ow alive was her writing, though, how full of force. Those curious, slanting letters. The blob of ink. Done yesterday' (p.46). The narrator's compulsion to destroy this evidence of her now voices the girl's desire to become the new Mrs. de Winter. Her success is short-lived, however, as, sitting for the first time at Rebecca's desk, she answers the house-phone and explains that Mrs. de Winter is dead. Significantly, it is only now that she first takes up the pen in desperation.

And as I wrote, in halting, laboured fashion, [...] I noticed for the first time how cramped and unformed was my own hand-writing, without individuality, without style, uneducated even, the writing of an indifferent pupil taught in a second-rate school. (p.67)

The relationship between the narrator and Rebecca is subsequently defined and developed through writing. Indeed, the narrator's quest for identity is given meaning by the struggle enacted through this medium between the two women. The written and spoken word has already been established in the text as empowering its user. This fact is distorted by the subjective narrator, whose heightened sensitivity interprets words as weapons of physical assault. Their use is thus given an additional context, one that renders the narrator a scapegoat, a martyr, and a Christ-figure. She is 'the whipping boy who must bear his master's pains', while there are 'thorns and pin-pricks in so many words' (pp.14, 13). Her feelings for Maxim, and hence her life at Manderley, further expose her vulnerability in this respect, for in love 'one is so easily bruised, so swiftly

wounded, one falls to the first barbed word', and again, 'in those days even a small deception scoured the tongue, lashing one against the stake itself' (pp.29, 30). The power of the spoken word is of course transferred onto the many instances of writing in the narrative. Since the spoken word as it refers to Rebecca is made impossible by her death, her pen becomes the obvious symbol of her power to hurt the narrator, and reflects the power of imagination, for she is thus far only a creation of the narrator's mind. The characteristics of the secondary narrative level are thus emphasised through the dominance of the imagination. Disproportionate emphasis is accordingly placed on '[t]hat bold, slanting hand, *stabbing* the white paper, the symbol of herself, so certain, so assured' (p.36, my italics). When the girl suspects that Maxim is lost in thoughts of his first wife, she consequently feels a 'stab of anxiety', repeating the 'stab of panic' she had first experienced on the approach to Manderley, Rebecca's domain (pp.26, 50). Early on in the text, Manderley becomes the site wherein the distortion and symbolism of writing take place, an underworld of oppressive disillusion that must be overcome. It is important to mention some of du Maurier's personal associations with Menabilly, the house on which Manderley is based. As Margaret Forster notes, at first glimpse of the house '[s]he thought of it immediately as being asleep [...] She felt that she could awaken this lovely house and with it awaken something in herself'.²¹⁸ The parallel of house and person is an important one, for the author felt that Menabilly was a virtually sentient thing, alive yet abandoned. The state thus imposed on the house is one directly associated by du Maurier with her own dilemma and her "boy-in-the-box", who was only ever given free reign there through writing. The creative spirit within her was therefore clearly and directly affiliated with this house, an aspect imposed onto Manderley.

²¹⁸ Forster, pp.59-60.

Horner and Zlosnik suggest that while writing in du Maurier's fiction denotes effeminacy when associated with male characters (Colonel Julyan's son, a poet, is rightly given as an example), it is linked with strength for female characters. The exception of nomenclature should, however, be added to this, for the assignation and signature of names is closely allied with the patriarchal power. This is sensed early on by the narrator when she pictures Maxim's return to Manderley, where he will find a letter written by her, forced and uninteresting, lying in wait for him amongst a pile of others. The Christmas card he would send in reply is then imagined, a sign of pity with a picture of the house on it, a printed message inside, and perhaps a signature in ink as a special kindness. The importance of nomenclature is further suggested by the narrator's comment that 'I was still child enough to consider a Christian name like a plume in the hat, though from the very first [Maxim] had called me by mine' (p.35). Likewise, *The Flight of the Falcon* has Armino scrutinizing the engraved scrolled initials on his brother's silver porringer. Also his own initials, he sees the reflection of his face through them, allying writing with identity. The narrator of *Rebecca*, imagining her future life at Manderley, thus anticipates writing her *new* signature – Mrs. de Winter (or in other words the name *given* to her by Maxim) – as an affirmation of some form of identity. Conversely, the constant appearance of Rebecca's *christian* name in the text is given added significance, for she is shown to possess an equal if not greater power than her counterpart in this respect.

The idea of writing as a means of opposing male authority can be traced in many of du Maurier's works, where it frequently signifies a rebellion against the father-figure, highlighting the need for an integrated *female* identity not based upon patriarchal values. The narrator of the short story 'The Alibi' seeks a double life as a surreal painter, an occupation often treated by du Maurier as an alternative to the creativity of writing, and

thus also a "feminised" activity (painting, explains Richard Grenville to his son, being a womanish pastime for foreigners (*KG*, p.282)). In this story, the narrator's subconscious reason for seeking a new life is briefly suggested when he assumes his father-in-law's name, highlighting the need to function beyond the ruling order. Similarly, in *I'll Never Be Young Again*, Dick seeks to challenge his father's iconic status as a legendary writer by taking up writing himself, yet it is only as a pornographic writer that his work gains any positive recognition. This theme becomes a major component of the storyline in *My Cousin Rachel*. Here, a significantly large part of the suspicion aimed at the heroine is based purely on the deterioration of the father-figure Ambrose's handwriting. It is not so much the altered tone of Ambrose's letters as the following collapse of his power to write clearly that rouses Philip's dislike of Rachel, for it suggests that the writer's autonomy, like his affection, has been appropriated by her. Hence the transfer of power from husband to wife: where Ambrose's usually clear hand is now 'scrawled, almost illegible' (p.33), Rachel's own writing startles Philip:

I don't know what I thought to see. Something bold, perhaps, with loops and flourishes; or its reverse, darkly scrawled and mean. This was just handwriting, much like any other except that the ends of the words tailed off in little dashes, making the words themselves not altogether easy to decipher. (p.67)

Clearly, writing is presented in this instance as a signifier of the person, and Philip's expectations have been imposed onto Rachel's writing – the flourishes which suggest promiscuity, or their reverse, crabbed and withdrawn. Even his suspicion of her, never to be resolved, is signalled here by the fact that he is unable to interpret her script.

The secrets that lie hidden in handwriting are heralded more clearly by the fact of Rachel's foreignness, and the indecipherability of an alien language. It is this, perhaps, that makes her relationship with Rainaldi so threatening. The latter's identity is instantly recognisable in his 'thin spidery hand' (p.333), and Philip's jealousy becomes channelled into this theme:

I pictured to myself the framework of the letter, what he had said to her, how he had addressed her – if, in short, it were a letter of love. It would be written in Italian. But here and there, though, there might be words I should understand.
(p.333)

Writing thus assumes the characteristics of a built construction, much like the collapsing 'framework' by which Philip finally kills Rachel. Here the letter is attributed by Philip with some form of written code by which the foreigners can secretly declare their sentiments for one another. Instead of cracking this code, however, Philip finds himself with an envelope of poisonous pods. It is appropriate that this dormant life should be kept in an envelope by Rachel, for writing has taken on a procreative quality, expressed through botany. The intention behind the dual purpose of these pods – whether to create life or to take it away – remains ambiguous, however. Rachel's ability to create life, as suggested by the introduction of foreign plants to a garden of her own, refers back to her refusal of Philip's proposal of marriage after having had sexual relations with him, and a transfer of her (pro)creative energies is suggested in this way. It is therefore appropriate that Philip should choose to murder her in this very area of creativity – her garden, a symbol of her independent powers of regeneration – and that he should accomplish this through the destruction of its 'framework'. It is Rachel's attempt to express her creativity

beyond the patriarchal system that leads Philip, its inheritor and enforcer, to safeguard his power by murdering her. This is an enactment of primary narrative 'ascent', which requires the return of the female identity to a state of 'descent', the ultimate form of which has already been identified as death. This view is further supported by the fact that Philip had by this stage *become* Ambrose, the father-figure, as his mirrored reflection in the act of strangling Rachel following her refusal of marriage shows. The return of the patriarchal figure has thus taken place through the reference to realist mode of the narrative level that refers to him, and as a direct consequence of the threat posed by the female identity's assertion as Other.

The association of power with procreativity and writing is one that is also present in *Rebecca*. It is initially introduced in reference to Maxim: the narrator's desire to be acknowledged by him assumes the form of a day-dream in which she has imagined a Christmas card sent to her by the owner of Manderley. The suggestion of sterility implied both by the signature and the wintry scene with its 'frosted background' (p.39) is later reversed, however, in the image of Rebecca which the narrator builds purely from the basis of her writing. She reads a potency into the strength of Rebecca's script that is repeated in the twisting and twining monogram on handkerchief and pillow. This not only echoes the mass of breeding and interbreeding of the plants in the opening sequence, but also its equivalent in the human world: thus the sensuous Carla Raspa's handwriting in *The Flight of the Falcon* also 'loop[s] its way across the page, its letters intertwined like amorous limbs' (p.122). Tamar Heller's argument that the pen in *Basil* should be read as a phallic symbol denoting power can equally well be applied here, for the image of Rebecca writing is vivid and repeated, and the first description of her handwriting is presented in strong terms:

A little blob of ink marred the white page opposite, as though the writer, in impatience, had shaken her pen to make the ink flow freely. And then, as it bubbled through the nib, it came a little thick, so that the name stood out black and strong. (*R*, p.29)

Mastery over writing is clear in this description, showing how the narrator has interpreted the script as an attestation of the first wife's strength of character as well as of her physical actions. There are also suggestions here of procreative energy, further affirmed by the sense that the writing is 'alive' (p.46), and assigned with an 'autonomous energy'.²¹⁹ Rebecca's pen itself is given great importance in the text, for the narrator must use it too, 'the narrow, slender pen with the bright pointed nib' (*R*, p.67), almost a vessel through which its previous owner's energy and life are channelled. Writing here thus clearly signifies the denial of male intervention in the lives of the text's female characters by being an expression of purely female creativity. Whereas this was accompanied by images of demonisation in Collins' fiction, as it also is here to a lesser degree, the positive connotations in this case are unmistakable, and express the Self's newly found power within the secondary narrative.

Horner and Zlosnik recognise the importance of Rebecca's writing in the novel, and focus on her power to ascribe names (no one else calls Maxim 'Max', for instance), as well as to possess.²²⁰ Both of these are, of course, conventionally male entitlements, and the strength which has emerged as being so closely allied to writing for women has also been interpreted as masculinity. This is reinforced in a description of the site of this power, Rebecca's desk, to which traditionally masculine qualities of purposefulness, order, resolution and precision are applied:

²¹⁹ Horner and Zlosnik, p.114.

This writing-table, beautiful as it was, was no pretty toy where a woman would scribble little notes, nibbling the end of a pen, leaving it, day after day, in carelessness, the blotter a little askew. The pigeon-holes were docketed, "letters-unanswered", "letters-to-keep", "household", "estate", "menus", "miscellaneous", "addresses". (*R*, p.65)

These outdated associations almost appear to refer back to the sensibilities surrounding the New Woman movement, and the belief that writing could alter the physical make-up of a woman to make her "masculine", as well as compromising her ability to reproduce. Accordingly, whereas the narrator's handwriting is 'unformed', Rebecca's may also be interpreted as the cause of her 'malformed' uterus (p.270). Thus, female writing both opposes and replaces the continuation of the male line in the text, a process acknowledged in the acquisition of what du Maurier perhaps subconsciously interprets as manly qualities. The immodest sexuality which Rebecca flaunts is part of this, for although a sexual creature, she remains childless, her physical vibrancy redundant in this sense. Importantly, the narrator, still the naive and child-like girl-bride, accepts without demur the role allotted to her – 'humble, shy, and diffident' (p.57) – anticipating a future as mother with certainty. Indeed, she even presumes that her children will all be boys, at least three by implication.

Such ideas are vital in affirming the increasingly close relationship between Rebecca and her successor, one that signals the narrator's 'ascent' as she incorporates Rebecca's strength into her own psyche. One of the first things that the narrator does following Maxim's confession, for instance, is to put a line through the day's menu

²²⁰ Ibid, p.113.

presented to her. In addition, it is only now, having properly assumed the role of Mrs. de Winter, and in so doing gained many of Rebecca's characteristics, that doubts about her future role as mother are introduced. These, aptly, are voiced on the journey home from Rebecca's doctor, where the discovery of the latter's physiological deformity has been made. Now the note of panic is clear, for the narrator's identification with the first wife is complete by this stage: '[w]e would have children. Surely we would have children' (p.276). Having implicitly rejected her expected social role through such an alteration of character, the answer to this question is clear, as we know from the start of the narrative. It is thus doubly significant that she dreams at this point about writing, '[b]ut when I looked down to see what I had written it was not my small square hand-writing at all, it was long, and slanting, with curious pointed strokes' (p.278). The narrator's 'wholeness' – that is to say, the loss of her double – has been shown to be signalled by the acquisition of those characteristics identified as Rebecca's. This is presented largely through a focus, as this section has shown, on handwriting within the narrative.

The emphasis on the two female characters' relation to motherhood serves to highlight the implications of this theme as du Maurier portrays it through writing. Judith Kegan Gardiner, using Philip Slater's distinction, observes that, in terms of female identity and its connection with the mother-figure, '[o]ften there is a conflict between a "personal identification" with the admirable aspects of the mother and a rejection of "positional identification" with the mother as victim'.²²¹ This could be interpreted as being the author's state of mind here, where the pull towards procreativity is coupled with a revulsion from the realistic situation into which motherhood propels the woman – one of responsibility, almost captivity, as exemplified in *Frenchman's Creek*. Du

²²¹ *Writing and Sexual Difference*, p.186, referring to Philip Slater in *Footholds: Understanding the Shifting Family and Sexual Tensions in Our Culture*, edited by Wendy Slater Palmer (New York, 1997),

Maurier herself voiced a similar thought when she observed, '[y]es, that business of wanting to be independent, and to be married too is, I should say, the great conflict that goes on in so many women's minds nowadays' (June 1955, *Letters From Menabilly*, p.49). The relevance of this conflict here is simply the fact that writing as represented by the author appears to unite the two elements, functioning as a distorted form of procreation while also denying the situational restrictions of motherhood.

An interesting perspective on the interlinked aspects of procreativity, artistic creativity and freedom through fantasy is presented in the short story 'The Alibi', which, although seemingly working along different lines, nevertheless draws on these ideas. The protagonist, Fenton, feels compelled to deny a mundane existence by murdering a random victim. Ringing a stranger's doorbell, he thus enters the lives of an immigrant mother and her small son, renting a basement room under the pretence of being an artist. An obvious element of fantasy constitutes the core of this story, with Fenton feeling that, by assuming a new identity, he 'had stepped out of bondage into a new dimension'.²²² In an effort to sustain the pretence, Fenton begins to paint, an activity, like writing, associated with procreativity. Consequently, when he paints the child, Fenton immediately feels more tolerance towards him, for '[i]t was as if the boy existed anew through him. *He was Fenton's creation*' (BP, p.30, my italics). Painting the mother, Anna, next, Fenton feels that

this was more satisfying still. It gave [him] a tremendous sense of power to put the woman upon canvas. It was not the eyes, her features, her colouring – heavens above, she had little enough colouring! – but somehow her shape: *the*

chapter 3 (pp.20-27).

²²² *The Breaking Point: Eight Stories by Daphne Du Maurier* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1977), p.11. All quotations from *The Breaking Point* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given

fact that the bulk of a live person, and that person a woman, could be transmuted by him upon a blank canvas. It did not matter if what he drew and painted bore no resemblance to a woman from Austria called Anna Kaufman. That was not the point. (p.30, my italics)

Once more, Fenton feels the exhilaration and power of creating, almost annihilating as he does so the real 'bulk of a live person' from reality, as indeed had been his initial intention.

[Happiness] is easier for a man' [...] 'a man is a creator, his happiness comes in the things that he achieves. What he makes with his hands, with his brains, with his talents'.

Possibly' [...] 'But women are not idle. Women have babies. That is a greater achievement than the making of a drawing, or the planning of an action'. (FC, p.74)

The parallel of creation within and without the body, by man and by woman, in this conversation between Dona and the pirate in *Frenchman's Creek* is echoed in 'The Alibi', where painting is presented as an inverted form of procreation. This idea, however, is given a twist towards the end of the tale with the discovery of an abortion that Anna has carried out on herself, a nasty parallel to Fenton's unnatural procreation. Ironically, there is also the possibility, left unanswered, that the child may be his, a charge against which Fenton, in another attempt at assuming a new identity, does not defend himself. Distortions of truth and illusion, of real and fantasy worlds as well as of gender are thus centred around some of the author's concerns about the nature of freedom and its impact

on what she called personal 'balance'. The analogy between Fenton's creativity and that of du Maurier herself is made clear in the light of her comment on the author's God-like position as creator. Closely implicated in this form of creation, Kegan Gardiner's theory that 'the hero is her author's daughter'²²³ places the writer in the role of both mother and child by being both the creator and in many ways the created as well. As in Collins' fiction, the "natural" powers of creativity are here also often subverted into a "masculinised" form as the female identity almost literally rewrites itself into wholeness. This is seen as an active departure of the secondary narrative from the primary, which has demonised the non-procreativity of the female character.

The present section has shown that, in contrast to the theme of writing in *The Woman in White*, where writing operates through the imagination to liberate the female character by allowing her to express and *be* herself, writing in *Rebecca* is employed as a means of drawing the two female characters together. The fragmented identity is perceived through the presence of the Other, who has been constructed by the imagination. It is the imposition of the imagination onto writing, similarly, that unites the two characters, and signals the protagonist's wholeness, and thus her narrative 'ascent'. As in *The Woman in White*, the references to procreation that are implicit in this theme culminate in the "birth" of the Self, an integrated and single identity existing beyond the perimeters of social values.

ii. Masquerade

The *physical* change in form that typifies narrative 'descent' is a manifestation of what Frye calls metamorphosis. This underlines the loss, or fragmentation, of the known identity. The previous chapter has shown that, in the fiction of Wilkie Collins, disguise,

²²³ *Writing and Sexual Difference*, p.179.

while often concealing social identity, was sometimes also a more accurate expression of the Self trapped in the narrative underworld. Consequently, the theme was more closely linked to '*ascent*' on a secondary narrative level, since it frequently referred to subversive characters and their quest for 'wholeness'. In du Maurier's fiction, as the present section will demonstrate, the fulfilment of the protagonist's liberation is made clear through disguise, or masquerade. With its focus on identity, doubling can be seen to play a more overt role through this theme, where it often replaces, or, in the case of *Rebecca*, accompanies, the movement to integration and wholeness of the Self. The authorial concern with identity is consequently clear, and this theme, like writing, involves a re-creation of the Self beyond the imposed standards of the primary narrative.

Acting, like writing, has already been established as having been an important component in exploring du Maurier's own need to acquire a 'balanced' sense of Self. Her experience of theatre and the element of "pretend" it taught her from a very young age are put to use in her fiction to examine notions of instability and illusion, and through them, of truth and self-knowledge. It is important to underline the extent to which this theme abounds in du Maurier's work, both in the novels and the short stories. Joss Merlin, for example, needs no disguise to transform his surface personality from monster to mother in a second, as he carefully cuts and butters Mary's bread – '[i]t was as if there was some latent power in his fingers which turned them from bludgeons into deft and cunning servants'; again, his menace is diffused when an alcoholic binge makes a child out of him.²²⁴ More directly, acting is transposed by professional performers into their real lives in 'The Supreme Artist', 'Leading Lady' and 'The Border-Line Case', while other stories use deception in a similar manner, as in 'The Lover', where the protagonist masks his infidelities with a skilled show of genuineness. 'Don't Look Now' likewise lulls the

reader by playing on the established image of beautiful Venice only to unmask the city, like the "child", to reveal an underbelly of death and grotesqueness. The ancient commercial capital of Italy, once surrounded by prosperous seaways now turned to dank and stagnant waters, thus gives birth not to an innocent and vulnerable infant, but to an ogress whose deformity is one of character as well as of body.

The Flight of the Falcon is a good example of the manner in which du Maurier employs the theme of acting and disguise on a large scale. It is a significant fact that the protagonist, Armino, is the younger of two brothers, a point the author exploits in establishing his sense of inferiority as well as his desire to define himself without reference to his sibling. This, however, is undermined when the elder brother, Aldo, returns from the dead.²²⁵ Marking the fragmentation of identity which this incurs, Armino undergoes his first disguise, here as a student: 'I doubted if even Aldo would recognise me. I might have been an immigrant just landed on American shores, a semi-barbarian' (*FF*, p.246). The persona that Armino strives to become here is one steeped in perceived qualities of physical prowess, and one that defines the competitive nature of his relationship with his brother. Although at first it appears that disguise is being incorporated into a desire to affirm the protagonist's identity in a patriarchal context, it is soon suggested that the Other is in fact a "feminine", or female, persona. This suggests the departure of values from a primary consciousness, and a reconstruction of identity on an independent level. The validity of the primary order is thus severely weakened.

Childhood games had established Armino as the less dominant, even effeminate brother, a quality that is now upheld by his refusal to bear the family name, and preferring to use his stepfather's instead. A reenactment of the legendary Duke's final ride

²²⁴ *Jamaica Inn* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1986) p.29.

²²⁵ There are clear echoes of R. L. Stevenson's *The Master of Ballantrae* in the plot here.

through the historic town sees Armino arrayed in the costume of the Falcon', and prepared to risk death in order to prove his worth. The manly persona he wishes to build for himself, however, gives way to the appearance of his Other:

The blonde wig framed my white, unshaven face, and my eyes confronted me, pale and staring, like the eyes of Claudio in the ducal palace portrait. They were also the eyes of Lazarus in the church of San Cipriano.

I turned to Jacopo. 'How do I look?' I said.

He considered me gravely, his head a little on one side. 'You look just like your mother, Signora Donati', he replied.

He meant it kindly, but it was the final insult. The humiliation of the years returned. The foolish figure that pattered in bare feet back to the chariot and mounted beside Aldo was not the Duke Claudio, not the Falcon it was supposed to represent, but a scarecrow effigy of the woman I had rejected and despised for twenty years. (pp.259-60)

The disfigurement of his self-perception, the transformation into a pathetic child pattering in bare feet, emphasise Armino's desire not only to establish an identity of heroism, but also to cast off forever any identification with his mother, whom he in fact resembles. This desire finds an outlet in the mysterious murder of his nanny, a surrogate mother-figure. The inability to deny the Other – here represented by the mother – as part of the Self likewise appears in the short story 'A Border-Line Case'. Here this is presented as a physical, genetic bond that cannot be ignored: '[h]ow loud and English her voice sounded on the air, reminding [Shelagh] of her mother. Like a socialite out of a glossy magazine' (*Not After Midnight*, p.126). Acting is here likewise used as an attempt at dissociation from the mother, but also fails. The competitiveness between the siblings

in *The Flight of the Falcon* culminates when Aldo finally *becomes* the Duke by repeating the 'Falcon's' suicide. The 'ascent', operating as it does here on a primary narrative level, thus dismisses the importance of Armino's Other, and establishes him instead, following his brother's death, as the head of the Donati family.

Dona St. Columb's role as mother – one that appears to be superfluous in *Frenchman's Creek*, as well as being inconsistent with the character of a romantic heroine in du Maurier's most romantic novel – becomes clearer in the context of disguise, and consequently of the double. Dressing herself first as a highwayman, then as a cabin-boy, it is made clear that Dona is escaping from her position as London hostess and society lady, as the geographical shift highlights. What is largely ignored by the text, however, is the escape from her role as mother, one which the author has insisted on giving her but which certainly never appears to fit the character. Dona's desire to *become* a boy (as opposed to merely dressing like one) implies a wish to obliterate the responsibilities imposed on her by gender, not least among which is motherhood and all that it entails. Such a view reinforces the dominance of the primary narrative in this text, where wholeness of the Self is based upon interpretations of "masculinity". This is taken a step further in other novels where, significantly, some of du Maurier's strongest women are rendered incapable of having children, and possess instead strong "masculine" qualities. Rebecca's physical abnormality, gratuitous in every other respect, might be read as a physical manifestation, even punishment, of her promiscuity, a viewpoint also present in *The Flight of the Falcon*, where Armino speculates that '[i]t could be that we get the death we deserve. That my mother, with her cancerous womb, paid for the dubious pleasure of that double bed' (p.79). Unsurprisingly, both of these women are depicted as independent and fully able to survive alone with success. "Masculinity" is also an important quality of Honor Harris' character in *The King's General*. Her ability to

command and maintain order, as well as to carry through dangerous plans with success, echoes the role of her lover, the king's general; indeed, she proves more successful in this than he. Like Signora Donati and Rebecca, she too has been reproductively incapacitated on the very brink of her marriage, in this instance through paralysis.

The physical incapacity to bear children is compensated for by the creative life of the imagination both in writing and in masquerade. This is seen clearly in *Rebecca*, as a dream-world replaces objective reality. Indeed, the setting of the novel, Manderley, is described as being nothing more than a make-believe world: 'I'm told it's like fairy-land, there's no other word for it' (p.16). The impossibility of defining this fantastical space in real terms of size or area is highlighted by the seemingly endless drive leading to the house, one likened by the narrator to a path in the forest of a Grimm's fairy-tale (p.98). There are also echoes of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* here, with nettles standing tall like ranks of sentinels to make a pathway for the rabbits, and daffodils forming an army (pp.8, 27). The narrator's maid is even called Alice, a role which is however quite literally embodied by the new mistress: in discussing the forthcoming masquerade ball, Maxim suggests that the narrator should be Alice-in-Wonderland, for 'you look like it now, with your finger in your mouth' (p.144). In such a reading, Rebecca is Queen; indeed, playing cards with the narrator on the evening prior to her departure, Mrs. Van Hopper flips the Queen of Spades into 'the pool, and the dark face stared up at me like Jezebel' (p.30), already identifying Rebecca's sexuality and foreignness, as well as hinting at her interment beneath the sea. The ill-fated costume previously worn to a ball by Rebecca is accordingly 'a dress fit for the Queen of England' (p.156). There are numerous other references to child's play, with Favell quoting nursery rhymes, the narrator feeling that she is playing a children's game with Mrs. Danvers, and Colonel Julyan's theory that the desire to dress up in costume is nothing but a child's desire.

The confusion of truth and illusion is thus an onrunning theme in the novel, emphasising the high degree of subjectivity which the narrator, like the child to whom she is repeatedly likened, imposes on her world. This highlights the author's desire to re-evaluate "truth", and reassess the social laws of the primary narrative by replacing such "truth" with an overwhelmingly subjective viewpoint; the former's fallaciousness is gradually exposed in this manner. The narrator's first sketch of Maxim is, appropriately, as a Gentleman Unknown whose accoutrements look like 'props in a charade' (p.20). Maxim's refusal to wear a costume to the ball is also an echo of *I'll Never Be Young Again*, where Hesta 'dresse[s] herself up as an apache. She had black trousers and a crimson shirt. She made up her face all white, with no colour at all except on her lips, and she brushed her hair behind her ears', while the narrator 'had not coped at all. I had bought a cheap pair of velvet trousers and wore an old shirt of Hesta's with a handkerchief knotted round my throat. God knows what I was meant to be'.²²⁶ Here too, it is the female character's active displacement of her perceived identity that creates tension and a loss of equilibrium in the male figure. In both cases this is achieved through a display of sexuality that has up to this point remained submerged as the property of husband or lover, a limitation which is now disrupted as the female character's imposed identity is overcome through costume. Disguise in this respect becomes a clear expression of the Self.

Rebecca in addition frequently refers to the theatre itself: outside on the lawn, a statue of a faun (when the narrator learns the truth about Maxim this will be referred to as a satyr) appears as if on a podium, a red curtain of rhododendrons behind it. This stage is accompanied by "acting" inside the house: Rebecca's room is a stage between performances, while the narrator, faced with a discussion of her marital problems,

²²⁶ *I'll Never Be Young Again* (London: Arrow Books, 1994) p.238.

becomes an actress on stage waiting for the curtain to come down. The employment of this technique to detach the narrative consciousness from events and plot culminates in the ball scene, where she is actually transformed into another person, '[n]ot me at all – someone much more interesting, more vivid and alive' (R, p.152). That a sense of release from imposed restriction has been achieved is suggested by the narrator's recognition that she is now more 'alive'. The identity that to her embodies this freedom is now revealed in the mirror, already defined as a screen between herself and Rebecca in previous references – '[t]he eyes were larger surely, the mouth narrower, the skin white and clear? The curls stood away from the head in a little cloud. I watched this self that was not me and then smiled; a new, slow smile' (p.157). Manderley itself has now become a giant stage with couples dancing like marionettes on strings, and the narrator and Maxim are wooden 'dummy stick[s]' (p.166) with smiles painted on. The physical resemblance between the narrator and Rebecca has in fact already been suggested in a more serious manner in the courtroom when the narrator, now possessing the 'knowledge' which had been withheld by Maxim, experiences, like the shot victim, a pain beneath her heart, and like the submerged body, feels the heat rising from the floor 'in slow waves. It reached my hands, wet and slippery, it touched my neck, my chin, my face' (p.228). It is significant that the reconstruction of the Self through association with Rebecca should take place in a courtroom, for it is the socially imposed identity that is being reinvented in the secondary narrative.

In *The Scapegoat*, du Maurier confirms that the object of masquerade and acting is ultimately to clarify a development of identity. The aspect of masquerade that involves assuming another's appearance and *becoming* that persona is the central idea in this novel, with the assumption not of a new appearance, but of a new identity possible without it. The author was extremely aware of her treatment of the topic of the double

here, claiming that she felt this novel had a deeper level of meaning than the others²²⁷; it was indeed written at a stage in her life when she was becoming increasingly aware of the nature of her own fragmented personality. What is made clear in this novel is that the process of the protagonist's development is in fact merely a rediscovery and expression of an inherent – or repressed – part of his character. This is firmly established at the start of *The Scapegoat* when the narrator, John, refers to the man he keeps locked within himself. It is his desire to have been born and bred a Frenchman that instigates the events of the narrative. Choosing the French which she also felt herself to be, the author introduces the idea of an internalised persona struggling for release, 'the self who clamoured for release, the man within'. John wonders

who he was and whence he sprang, what urges and what longings he might possess [...] I was so used to denying him expression that his ways were unknown to me; but he might have had a mocking laugh, a casual heart, a swift-roused temper, and a ribald tongue. He did not inhabit a solitary book-lined apartment.²²⁸

The increasingly negative image which John constructs of his double – 'he might have laughed, roistered, fought and lied. Perhaps he suffered, perhaps he hated, perhaps he lived by cruelty alone [...] Whatever his nature, he always hovered beneath the insignificant façade of that pale self' (*S*, p.10) – is clearly reminiscent of 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde', yet here the events are played out in an altogether more realistic manner. This inner man who, as Mr. Hyde from Jekyll, also 'springs' from John,

²²⁷ Forster, p.286.

²²⁸ *The Scapegoat* (London: Arrow Books, 1992), p.9. All quotations from *The Scapegoat* are taken from this edition. Subsequent page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

is his *alter ego*, the Frenchman Jean de Gué. While the narrator seeks to escape his solitary world of intellect, Jean appears not only to be the means of escape, from but also the *product* of that intellect, just as du Maurier's "boy-in-the-box" was a product of her creativity as well as an escape from day-to-day life.

Despite the fact that the protagonist's inner conflict is given shape by the existence of two distinct personas, there is no necessity for any alteration of appearance, and the two characters are physically identical. The subtle changes that do come about in the narrator's character are thus founded on disposition; putting on Jean's clothes thus effects 'a change of *personality*: my shoulders looked broader, I seemed to hold my head higher, even the expression in my eyes resembled his' (p.27, my italics). This endorses the role of costume in *Rebecca* as an indicator of an altered *inner* identity. The influences of Stevenson remain clear, however, especially when a "transforming" liquid appears: while pondering on how to set the man within free, John arrives at no conclusion, 'except, of course, the blurred and temporary one which a bottle of wine at a café might bring me' (p.10). It is consequently in the station bar, and at the very moment of drinking, that his elbow is jolted by Jean, his double. In a parallel to Stevenson's fire/potion imagery, the drinker here also feels 'a comfortable glow inside' (p.15); in both cases this functions as a catalyst. Similarly, the first signs of transformation here are a sense of evil accompanied by a feeling of departure from reality; like Hyde, John furthermore finds himself in a drab and sleazy part of town.

Du Maurier may also have referred to Stevenson's insinuations of homosexuality in 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' by making her character consciously deny such notions. The idea is introduced when Jean, told of the narrator's intention of visiting a nearby monastery, exclaims: '[p]erhaps you're a drunkard [...] or a homosexual' (p.15). Following a night spent in a hotel with Jean, the narrator awakens to find himself

in the other's clothes, 'and somehow the thought of it was distasteful, and I brushed it aside because I did not want to remember anything else that might have happened' (p.25). The hotel receptionist draws his own conclusions concerning this relationship, while Jean's chauffeur accepts finding the person he assumes is his employer here as the norm. By entering Jean's life, the narrator has also adopted the life of someone who is bisexual by implication, a part of his own identity he can perhaps only face in this detached fashion. This suggests, in addition to possible influences from Stevenson, that du Maurier may have been coming to terms, in later life, with her own ambiguous sexuality, one which in all likelihood contributed enormously to her treatment of the theme of masquerade, and indeed of the motif of the double as a whole. She felt that her life in this respect had been lived as a lie and a pretence, as she admitted in a letter to Ellen Doubleday, with whom it is almost certain that she was romantically involved.²²⁹ The ambiguous gender of many characters is perhaps also explained by this fact. Jean's mother in *The Scapegoat* is described by John, for example, as

a massive elderly woman, her flesh sagging in a hundred lines, but her eyes, her nose, her mouth so astonishingly and horribly like my own that for one wild moment I believed that after all Jean de Gué had come up here before me and was masquerading as a final jest. (p.40)

It might almost be the author herself speaking in fear of old age and dissociation from her "female" Self when John refers to the mother as 'another facet of the self, but elderly, female, and grotesque' (p.40). This 'facet of the self', Horner and Zlosnik argue in reference to *Don't Look Now*'s dwarf character, typifies du Maurier's fear of old age, as

²²⁹ Forster argues this convincingly, especially in the light of a letter written by the author to Ellen

well as exposing an aversion to the older woman.²³⁰ This is in addition related to the author's creative male persona and the fear of losing her creative energy. At the end of 'Don't Look Now', John's death suggests, they propose, the death of this inner boy, while 'the figure of the dwarf is a grotesquely parodic version of the bent and shrunken older woman who kills the 'boy-in-the-box' '.²³¹ John's departure to a monastery in the concluding scene of *The Scapegoat*, where his creativity will be 'boxed' up, thus also coincides with the elderly mother's reentry into life as head of the family. The emergent matriarchal identity here, however, is portrayed as a strong one and not as a weak elderly woman, as the above argument would necessitate. Although the ideas centring around the author's fear of old age are relevant, the present study would argue that the shift of power that is seen in *The Scapegoat* is largely concurrent with the acquisition of wholeness for the protagonist; of the loss of the double as is also seen to be the case in *Rebecca*.

The suppression and expression of certain parts of a woman's personality appears to have been of great personal interest to du Maurier, for she claimed that there are three 'types' of woman – ruling, ministering and prostitute – whose interchangeability she exemplified in reference to herself and the effect of marriage on this shift:

I realize I started out in married life by trying to be the ministering type, and succeeded – *but* at the cost of great mental disturbance to myself, and a squishing of the ruling type, who simmered. Come the war, and the ministering type began to fade, and the ruling type emerged, bringing a feeling of mental

Doubleday in 1947, and quoted in full by Forster on p.221.

²³⁰ Horner and Zlosnik, p.184.

²³¹ Ibid, p.185.

power to myself (and, I suspect, a feeling of squished humility to [my husband]). (*Letters from Menabilly*, June 1955, p.50)

It could be claimed that all the female members of the de Gué family fall into this categorisation, with their unity as part of a single entity upheld by John's vision of the three adult females as 'the triptych of a single countenance' (*S*, p.272). Du Maurier's train of thought with respect to these different 'types' of women both originates from and ends with an avowal of her fascination with the conflict between patriarchal and matriarchal societies. Women's struggle to achieve a correct balance within themselves – or, in terms of the double, a singleness or unity – as witnessed in *Rebecca*, is interpreted in this later text as a return to matriarchy, in an equation of female personal and public power.²³² It is therefore appropriate that *The Scapegoat* concludes with the matriarchal head ultimately replacing the lost Masculine, or creative, Self. 'What interests me, is *whether* Woman, as such, has been quietly seething to get back to a Matriarchal society ever since (though unconsciously), and whether individual women with careers [...] are all part of a huge, unconscious, rather terrifying Movement!' (*Letters from Menabilly*, June 1955, p.50) The present study would contend that du Maurier portrays, whether consciously or not, this conflict in her work through the theme of masquerade, and sets marriage, and more particularly motherhood, in competition against the independence which she perceives as a male prerogative; her own display of independence, for instance, results in a virtual usurpation of her husband's position, leaving him, as she puts it, 'squished'. The abdication of such power, however, would result, as she believes, in 'mental disturbance', one clearly portrayed in the de Gué mother's drug-addiction, a condition miraculously

²³² The sense of balance, or wholeness, so important to the author may be compared to Virginia Woolf's desire, expressed in *A Room of One's Own*, to find a reality that is independent from 'the historian's view of the past', one concomitant with what she called "a unity of the mind" (pp.67, 146).

overcome when she is reinstated as matriarch. This 'disturbance' is further highlighted by a contrast of the two matriarchal types, the de Gué mother and Julie: 'both women were strong, virile, tender, fundamentally the same; and yet one of them had grown awry, twisted, and in a strange way maimed, and it was because of something within herself that had never flourished' (S, p.167). This balance is however restored when John, now a baptist- as well as a scapegoat-figure, initiates the members of the de Gué family into a new life. The theme of masquerade, or disguise, is thus clearly presented as effecting a 'balance' or integration of the Self. In *The Scapegoat*, this is equated with the reemergence of a matriarchal power, and hence may refer to the author's gradual acceptance of her 'female' Self, as her interest in the subject in later life indicates. Disguise, or masquerade, has therefore played a significant role in the secondary narrative progression by placing the 'ascent' of the female identity in context, and clarifying the opposition of social and personal values.

iii. Fire

The myths of fire, and especially of stealing it, that often accompany narrative 'ascent' according to Frye would appear to indicate a form of rebirth for the protagonist. Culminating as they do at this stage in the narrative structure, images of fire should in addition be coincidental with the disappearance of the double, an event that signals the emergence of a single, whole, identity. The motif of fire is one that has appeared in several of the central texts of the present study in this capacity, and is one that is also given an important role in *Rebecca*. In all, however, its textual presence is a fairly subtle one, employed metaphorically and symbolically through the course of the narrative and given more literal expression towards the conclusion. It is significant that Stevenson, Collins and du Maurier all relate it to the question of identity and hence make it intrinsic

to the theme of the double; more specifically, it is implicated in the acknowledgement and disclosure of the relationship of the doubles to each other, as well as in the movement towards the protagonist's liberation, or wholeness, as charted by the narrative. The narrator of *Rebecca*, for instance, is initially given little voice within the narrative dialogue. The extent to which her feelings and desires remain unspoken is exemplified when Maxim proposes to her and accepts her consent for granted, since she remains mute. When she talks of herself to him in self-forgetfulness, therefore, the sudden realisation of her expressiveness results in a face 'afame' with remorse (*Rebecca*, p.23).

As a signifier of the inner Self actualized as Other, fire is appropriately also a motif used in close conjunction with the expressive themes of writing and acting, or disguise. Robert Louis Stevenson, as the present study has shown, makes fire a vital component in the construction of the potion-imagery in 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'. The transforming chemical accordingly results in the emergence of a man wearing clothes too large for him, whose face looks like a mask. At the close of the narrative, having just found Hyde's body, Utterson and Poole are suddenly startled by the sound of a kettle boiling over in the fireplace, where they find a 'pious work for which Jekyll had several times expressed a great esteem, annotated, in his own hand, with startling blasphemies.'²³³ The contrast of tea-making and blasphemy is a startling one. Fire is in this instance clearly affiliated with themes of 'ascent', and the expression of the Other beyond traditional boundaries.

In *The Woman in White*, fire is identified with a specifically female energy. The fire-imagery used to depict freedom as experienced through writing has already been observed, a relationship which culminates when Marian writes herself into a fever. The

²³³ *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *Weir of Hermiston*, edited with an introduction by Emma Letley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.50.

external agent of this illness, significantly, occurs when she removes her cumbersome skirts and, in a symbolic rejection of her female status, daringly climbs onto the roof to eavesdrop in the rain. Fire is thus appropriated into both the theme of writing and of disguise by this outcome. As in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the finale of this novel externalizes the motif, as Sir Percival Glyde is burned to death in the vestry. It is the vestry register, hand-written and affirming the truth of the social order, that is the cause of this event, in which both it and the "disguised" baronet perish.

There are clear parallels to *Jane Eyre* in the manner in which du Maurier has chosen to apply the motif of fire in *Rebecca*. The constant references to fire in Brontë's novel are too numerous and overt to be overlooked, and it is clear that the symbol has both positive and destructive connotations. When the female spirit expresses itself, fire becomes a metaphor of strength; if, on the other hand, it is restrained, 'the imprisoned flame [will] consume[] vital after vital', an image externalised in the outcome of both novels.²³⁴ The fire-symbol is however specifically related to the creative imagination: the reader is told that Jane's nurse, Bessie, when in a good humour, would tell the children stories by the fire; Jane and Helen Burns read by the light of the embers in the hearth; whereas Rochester, while recognizing, appreciating and drawing out Jane's character and individuality, also brings with him a multitude of fire-images. The most overt instance of disguise, the gentry's game of charades, is however free of this association, for it fails to truly alter, conceal, or reinvent identity, but Rochester's more cunning disguise as a gipsy woman, one that is identified with the mysterious side of his character, is played out by the dim light of the library fire.

Despite the fact that the metaphor is not as predominant in *Rebecca*, it is applied in a telling manner. A memorable scene, for instance, involves the narrator, in an entirely

uncharacteristic action, attempting to obliterate the memory of Rebecca by burning her name on the fly-leaf of a book of poetry. Rebecca's writing and signature here have assumed, in the girl's mind at least, the qualities of the woman who still seems to exist through them. Tearing the page into little pieces proves insufficient, however, and the writing glares out unremittingly, forcing itself into the narrator's thoughts.

I took a box of matches and set fire to the fragments. The flame had a lovely light, staining the paper, curling the edges, making the slanting writing impossible to distinguish. The fragments fluttered to grey ashes. The letter R was the last to go, it twisted in the flame, it curled outwards for a moment, becoming larger than ever. Then it crumpled too; the flame destroyed it. It was not ashes even, it was feathery dust. (*R*, p.46)

The confidence exhibited here, coupled with detachment and lack of emotion, is indeed more like the narrator's own image of Rebecca than like herself. Transfixed by the flame, this suddenly becomes a delight, a 'lovely' thing, the metaphorical enactment of the death of the first Mrs. de Winter and the birth of the second. Aptly, this scene also takes place when Maxim is in the adjacent room announcing the couple's forthcoming marriage, heralding the approach of the girl's new social identity. The R of the inscription is of course the central focus of this episode, and the subjectivity of the narrative is suggested by the surreal manner in which this letter appears to increase in size before finally vanishing. The act also parallels Maxim's murder of Rebecca, for the letter which has *become* her is almost sentient, twisting and writhing in the flame and finally crumpling,

²³⁴ *Jane Eyre*, p.433.

destroyed, into ashes and dust. Affirming renewal, the narrator follows the burning of the inscription by washing her hands. And with this,

I felt better, much better. I had the clean, new feeling that one has when the calendar is hung on the wall at the beginning of the year. January the 1st. I was aware of the same freshness, the same gay confidence. (pp.46-47)

The ritualistic assumption of her new role as mistress of Manderley in this scene is later confirmed: 'A new confidence had been born in me when I burnt that page and scattered the fragments [...] The past had blown away like the ashes in the waste paper basket. I was going to be Mrs. de Winter' (p.48). This confidence is short-lived, however, for she will by no means be successful in her new position. Rebecca's body, too, has not been disposed of effectively and, like her inscription, will reappear again to haunt the narrative. The narrator's inability to dismiss her double in this way anticipates their integration later on. Du Maurier's inversion of this narrative motif here, where it fails to signal 'ascent', will repeat itself later on, at the book's conclusion, as will be demonstrated.

The second stage during which fire becomes closely related to matters of identity takes place on the night of the fancy-dress ball. Foretelling Manderley's fate, every window now appears as if 'afame, the grey walls coloured by the falling stars. A house bewitched, carved out of the dark woods' (p.168). The woods themselves appear to have dominion over the house now, and 'burn[]' in an ominous foreboding of the disaster to come. The many parallels to *Jane Eyre* lead the reader to expect a similar outcome of events here, one of renewal highlighted and realised through fire. The author contributes to this expectation by several references to rebirth in connection to the motif. Indeed, we

have already been forewarned at the start of the narrative that 'to advance in this or any world we must endure ordeal by fire' (pp.9-10), a phrase also found at the close of 'A Border-Line Case', a short story dealing solely with the protagonist's discovery of her true identity. In both cases, fire is depicted as an agent of rebirth, a catalyst of renewal, and is used again in this sense in *Rebecca* when the narrator is likened to Joan of Arc. Here, however, such a rebirth is seen to be concerned with the recognition and liberation of an inner, heretofore dissociated identity, one only rendered accessible through a heightened state of subjectivity and introspection. The narrator's appearance as Rebecca during the costume ball affirms the connection between fire and identity in this respect, and signals that this integration is now complete.

The closing scene of the novel, in its most overt resemblance yet to *Jane Eyre*, sees Manderley destroyed by fire, here also the consuming fire of the Other. It remains uncertain who or what has caused this, although Mrs. Danvers, Rebecca's advocate, is the most likely suspect. The manner in which the narrator refers to her first and only sight of this event is directly analogous to the burning of the fly-leaf, as well as to Rebecca's murder. Consequently, the destruction of Manderley, representing as it does the lineage of which Maxim is so proud, appears to be virtually a revenge of the dead, a fitting punishment which the murderer has thus far evaded. '[T]he sky on the horizon was not dark at all. It was shot with crimson, like a splash of blood. And the ashes blew towards us with the salt wind from the sea' (p.279); the 'shot', 'blood' and 'ashes' hence symbolise both a revival and a reversal of the murder, as well as of the burning of Rebecca's identity. Although the reader recognises this as a conventional form of ritual purging in which the past is laid to rest, giving way to a new, more positive life, the outcome has already been divulged, and does not conform to such an expectation. For with the reversal of narrative order, the reader has seen the couple exiled, leading an

existence void of both life and activity in a sterile, alien environment. Although Maxim, like Rochester, has been figuratively crippled and must be tended by his wife, there is no clearly positive aspect to this union, a fact suggested by the couple's childlessness.

The theme of fire in *Rebecca*, as in *The Woman in White*, is seen to thwart the expected narrative sequence. Du Maurier has already suggested this by the inversion of narrative chronological order; whereas fire appears at the end of the story in the conventional manner, and may in this sense be assumed to herald the birth of a new life, the opening scenes of *Rebecca* have already undercut this expectation. The expected narrative structure is thwarted by the author, indicating a return to ascendancy of the primary narrative order, and the impossibility of permanent freedom for the female identity. This in turn anticipates a *second 'descent'* for the female character, one that constitutes a new and meaningful stage in the narrative progression. Narrative sequence has thus been purposefully manipulated, as the final section will illustrate, for while the motif of fire has signalled liberation and wholeness for the female protagonist, a reversal will take place, as in *The Woman in White*, that enables the hero's reassumption, or at least partial reassumption, of his previous dominant position. This, then, will be the *primary narrative 'ascent'*.

4.4 Conclusion

The opening of *Rebecca* can be seen to follow on directly from the closing scene, resulting in a circular narrative. Thus, while the imagery used in describing the fancy-dress ball predicts the destructive fire, this festive event also heralds the couple's ultimate exile from England. The narrator effectively dresses as Rebecca in what can be read as an attempt to adopt the role of hostess and wife, yet the failure of this venture is later emphasised by the childless and isolated existence that the couple impose upon

themselves. A ball is also used to mark the coming of age of the protagonist in *The King's General*, a celebration that likewise goes awry. In *Rebecca*, the entire episode assumes a nightmarish quality, with its depiction of couples waltzing like automatons with fixed smiles, and the garish flashes of bursting fireworks. The narrator is separated by her inactivity and sense of unreality. This detachedness continues during her lonely wait for morning, one made longer by the sight of the empty bed beside her, 'stark and cold. Soon there would be no shadows in the room at all, the walls and the ceiling and the floor would be white with morning' (p.170), a bare whiteness that will characterize the couple's life later on. The episode describing the costume ball has, in stressing the narrator's subjectivity, imparted the sense of a dream-world; as she waits for morning, an end to this perspective is consequently anticipated. Cold daylight heralds an impending return to reality, while the absence of her husband from the marital bed also accounts for many of the qualities which the substitutive fantasy-world had assumed. The creativity of the imagination within the secondary narrative structure is thus replaced now by the consciousness of non-procreativity in the primary narrative, and a reversal of focus is suggested, as the female identity must once again return to its initial position.

The horror of being totally known is so great that most romances evade it by the device of a trial founded on an unjust, malicious, or mistaken charge, which the hero or heroine avoids by the revelation of his or her real identity'.²³⁵ The inquest that takes place in *Rebecca* appears at the expected stage of the narrative, and suggests that Maxim is a murderer. While the traditional romance narrative presupposes that the suspicion is a wrong one, however, du Maurier reverses this assumption, for Maxim is indeed the killer. Consequently, it is the exposure not of his, but of *Rebecca's* identity as it is perceived by the moral and hierarchical system that acquits him. The device of the

virgin-detecting gadget, the machine which proves that the heroine really is one in spite of everything', is a part of the disclosure of such knowledge according to Frye.²³⁶ This, however, is also reversed, for Rebecca's socially reprehensible sexuality is an important part of her demonisation, and of Maxim's acquittal. The re-establishment of the previous order – that is, the return to dominance of the primary narrative – is thereby complete. Like Laura in *The Woman in White*, who is claimed by Hartright following Marian's symbolic rape, the narrator here replaces Rebecca in a similar, traditional, context as her "pure" double. The close of the novel, nevertheless, sees the narrator dreaming of a scene of judgement in which she is

writing letters in the morning-room [...] I got up and went to the looking-glass. A face stared back at me that was not my own. It was very pale, very lovely, framed in a cloud of dark hair. The eyes narrowed and smiled. The lips parted. The face in the glass stared back at me and laughed. And I saw then that she was sitting on a chair before the dressing-table in her bedroom, and Maxim was brushing her hair. He held her hair in his hands, and as he brushed it he wound it slowly into a thick long rope. It twisted like a snake, and he took hold of it with both hands and smiled at Rebecca and put it round his neck. (*R*, p.278)

This extraordinary enactment of justice involves both Rebecca and the narrator, as the 'I' fluidly becomes 'she'. The beginnings of the 'return to patriarchy' mentioned by the author are implied in this episode, an idea fortified by an association with du Maurier's own mother here, for as her sister Angela recalls, the author

²³⁵ Frye, p.123.

²³⁶ Ibid, p.123.

could not bear to see my mother with her hair down [...] [she] would go crimson in the face and pick grass, or if indoors keep her eyes steadfastly on the rug, as if she were being made a witness to something obscene.²³⁷

This is a suggestion of an interest in a new method of acquiring 'balance' for the central narrative identity – a new solution for the harmony sought by the author. It is an idea that is however not explored further, but corroborates the suggestion that the dream-world is one specific to the female imagination, as Maxim's imaginary "execution" by Rebecca/the narrator illustrates.

Following the night of the ball, there are increasing signs of the end of the narrator's dream-world. The reassertion of physical reality, and of social order and routine, are identified by Maxim's acquittal from suspicion, for the 'record of every appointment booked throughout the year, and a description of the case' (p.268) held by Rebecca's doctor restores him to his dominant position. While diagnosing her illness, the doctor has furthermore discovered Rebecca's physiological abnormality, as well as judged her personally to have been 'rather too thin I remember, rather pale' (p.270). These signs of the return of an objective as opposed to a subjective reality culminate in the final scene, with its references to 'another world' (p.263). It is on the final trip back to Manderley, one never physically achieved within the boundaries of the text, that this shift takes place. Feelings of timelessness and confusion become more acute as the narrator sleeps in the back of the car, a muddle of pictures and images related to the narrative events passing through her mind. The division of sleep and wakefulness becomes indistinct, as, in another parody of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the girl suddenly cries out, '[w]hat's the time? [...] what's the time?' (p.277). The fact that the

²³⁷ Du Maurier, Angela, *It's Only the Sister* (London: Peter Davies, 1951), pp.4-5.

majority of the text is sandwiched between two dream-sequences relating to the narrator takes on new meaning, and may now be read as a representation of the subjective world of the secondary narrative. Like Alice, one might say of the narrator too that 'this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people.'²³⁸

The reversal of balance between real and imaginary ultimately results in the complete internalisation of the narrative's Manderley by the girl, leaving a barren external world, clean and white as an unspoiled sheet of paper. The printed word which was shown to rule Mrs. Van Hopper's as well as Maxim's world reappears in full force now, while the written word fades away. The sterility that had heretofore only been an implied presence in Maxim's world likewise becomes dominant, the very atmosphere 'white and impersonal', 'that glittering sun, that hard, clean sky', in a place where '[n]o shadows steal upon this hard glare, the stony vineyards shimmer in the sun and the bougainvillea is white with dust' (pp.11, 9, 12). The contrast with the richness of the girl's subjective view of Manderley is highlighted, and even now, the only true stimulus in the narrator's unvarying existence must come from her imagination, a secret escape from this death-in-life.

Any conclusions to be made must be drawn from the opening of the narrative (in other words the close of chronological events), as the narrator returns to Manderley in a dream. The girl's acknowledgement of the estate's continued existence in her imagination is important, for in spite of the end of her dream-world, it has been internalised to a certain degree. Her image of Manderley is changed, however. From the picture-postcard she had dreamt it to be before meeting Maxim, it has now become an exotic space containing the more disturbing, subjective aspects of the estate – those of darkness,

²³⁸ Carroll, Lewis, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass* (London: Everyman Library Children's Classics, 1992), p.19.

uneasiness, and looking over one's shoulder – aspects that must remain her 'secret indulgence' (p.11). The narrator's 'ascent' – her identification with Rebecca and subsequently her wholeness – have been signalled by writing, masquerade, and by those final episodes wherein her reflected image transmuted into that of her Other. The awakening from sleep in the concluding scene, while constituting a clear 'break in consciousness', does *not*, as the theory of romance narrative structure would demand, precede an 'ascent', but rather a second 'descent'. The singleness of identity experienced in *Manderley* has been a condition reached purely through subjective development by the creation of an alternative narrative progression on a secondary level. The second 'descent' hence functions as a return to the narrator's initial state, as the circular construction of the narrative suggests. The development that has taken place during the course of the narrative is now only perceptible in the girl's *acknowledgement* of an inner life. This is made clear in her imaginary excursions to Manderley, where Rebecca can still be heard and felt in and through the landscape. This suggests a development of Wilkie Collins' representation of the theme, for in his fiction no such change in the protagonist is visible.

Horner and Zlosnik read du Maurier's representation of the Other not only as that which is desired, but also as 'a terrifying force who may well invade and destroy the self'.²³⁹ As the present study has shown, however, the Other never 'destroys' the Self, being a part of it, but serves rather as an embodiment of qualities that the protagonist must incorporate if balance of character is to be acquired, a balance sought by the author herself. The achievement of this purpose is nevertheless undercut by the reemergence of the established order from which the narrative has attempted to break away. This tension is played out in the religious references in many of the texts: 'The Alibi' corrupts the image of Madonna and child into one of Anna and her boy, while *The Flight of the*

Falcon outlines a distorted parallel to the stories of Lazarus and Christ's temptation. In *The Scapegoat*, John's initial intention of going to the monastery of La Grande Trappe in search of guidance is likewise interrupted by the fatalistic appearance of his double, causing him to deviate from his route. The intermittent call of institutionalised religion at critical points in this narrative – most often as the summoning of the Angelus – is thus significant in suggesting an attempt to pull the protagonist/dreamer back to the world of reality, that is, the world of the primary narrative. Those of du Maurier's works which most clearly deal with the double can be said to have completed a full circle, ending where they began: Dona St. Columb returns to her life as wife and mother; *The Scapegoat*'s John both enters and exits the narrative while driving to the monastery; and *Rebecca* begins and ends with the narrator's approach to Manderley.

This device supports the idea that the narrative has been an excursion of fancy, especially since there is a distinct element of secrecy involved: Dona's husband and the rest of the local inhabitants know nothing of the adventures she has had; Jean's family are left ignorant of the fact that he has been replaced by his double; and the new Mrs. de Winter must indulge in an alternate dream-life kept secret from her husband. Thus, although the former order has indeed been restored, the protagonist/dreamer has altered, emerging as a character more rounded and more at peace with him or herself. The shy awkwardness of the nameless narrator of *Rebecca* has consequently vanished, while Dona's dissatisfaction has been eased, and John's frustration allayed. The circular construction of the narrative progression is thus significant in departing from the traditional representation of narrative structure, and marks the particular relevance of the progression for the female or "feminised" identity, although it is ultimately unable to create a momentous structural change by replacing the primary narrative.

²³⁹ Horner and Zlosnik, p.26.

In her study of aspects of female writing, Jaqueline McLeod Rogers makes the point that female writing is more inclined to focus on an inner world of thought and emotion rather than on an external one of action, a tension certainly apparent in du Maurier's work. In reference to the endings of such novels, Rogers believes that women writers usually 'explore as destructive the escapist attitude of heroines who too far prefer fantasy to reality'.²⁴⁰ The present study would agree that the collapse of the fantasy-world itself may be construed as one destructive to the development of the central female identity, yet it is never presented as untimely within the context of narrative events. Whereas, for instance, both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca* expose the protagonist's desire for a sense of wholeness, *Jane Eyre* employs a linear method of progression, in the tradition of Bunyan, the result of which is

a distinctively female *Bildungsroman* in which the problems encountered by the protagonist as she struggles from the imprisonment of her childhood toward an almost unthinkable goal of mature freedom are symptomatic of difficulties Everywoman in a patriarchal society must meet and overcome.²⁴¹

Conversely, *Rebecca* does not present a finite beginning and end, nor an indisputable progression. Consequently, while the protagonist's reward in *Jane Eyre* is symbolised by the final setting of Ferndean, unpretentious yet peaceful and fertile with its dense dark foliage, *Rebecca*'s digression from this tradition is signified by the almost clinical sterility that describes the de Winters' existence. Unlike *Jane Eyre*, then, there is no physical end to be gained here, no tangible purpose sought through the workings of the plot on a primary narrative level. This is signified by the references to a scapegoat in both *Rebecca*

²⁴⁰ *Aspects of the Female Novel* (Wakefield, New Hampshire: Longwood Academic, 1991), p.25.

– where the narrator is likened to a whipping-boy, a Christ-figure and a martyr – and *The Scapegoat*. For the process of 'phantasying' has been seen to act, like the scapegoat, as a remedy to that which is unsatisfactory in "real" existence.

The re-establishment of the social order does not necessarily preclude the possibility of balance for the protagonist, for this has already been accomplished, to a certain extent at least. Whereas the conventional romance narrative is structured in terms of 'descent' followed by 'ascent', with the purpose of 'reintegrating the existing order',²⁴² the subjective level on which those of du Maurier's narratives assessed in the present study operate means that it is not the physical – or 'existing' – social order that must be recovered, but a personal integration that must be achieved. While a return to the pre-existing order does indeed take place, this is therefore presented as a '*descent*' for the Self, a shift away from a subjective inner world in which harmony has been established, and one in which du Maurier herself experienced a sense of liberation. The tension between the two narrative levels which the author has drawn has been significant in charting this progression, during the course of which her concerns about the nature of identity, and indeed of truth itself, have been explored. The narrative underworld relating to the female identity has therefore been characterised accordingly, and her narrative 'ascent' has taken place without relying on the values of the primary narrative. The identification with the double as Other, and its subsequent integration into the central identity, is seen to have been succeeded by its reappearance following the second 'descent', a 'descent' that appears to be specific to the female as protagonist on a secondary narrative level. The hero's own 'ascent' is concomitant with this change. Du

²⁴¹ Gilbert and Gubar, p.339.

²⁴² Frye, p.138.

Maurier has thus clearly subverted the ordinary course of narrative structure to give new meaning to the text, one highlighted by the inclusion of two narrative levels.

Conclusion

The present study has sought to fill a gap in existing literary criticism by applying Northrop Frye's *perception* of romance narrative structure, as based around a 'descent' and 'ascent', to the fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson, Wilkie Collins, and Daphne du Maurier – three authors of particular importance to the literature of the double – with special reference to the role of the motif in this progression. This role has been examined through the relationship of the double to certain themes – namely the representation of landscape, animals, masquerade, writing, and fire – which have traced the narrative progression from 'descent' to 'ascent'. The application of a structural analysis to narratives that are largely subjective in nature has resulted in the identification of two narrative levels; the present study has termed these *primary* and *secondary* narratives. It has been shown that the first of these refers to a system of events that is objective, and that follows the traditional structural course as outlined by Frye. The secondary narrative, however, refers to a more subtle level of experience based upon a highly subjective view, and involves a subversion of the expected narrative structure of 'descent' and 'ascent'.

As a basis for developing these concepts, relevant literary backgrounds which have influenced the authors have been determined in the first chapter. In the context of the present study, these fall into two main categories: religious and Gothic. This premise has been important in determining the nature and relative success of the narrative 'ascents' depicted by these authors. Stevenson's fiction has proven to be unique amongst the three in this respect. By approaching an analysis of his work from this angle, the present study has concluded that, although operating through many of the same themes, Stevenson's narratives remain fixed in a state of 'descent'. It has furthermore been shown that this is a direct result of the author's inability to liberate his creative thought from a religious moral perspective, one that necessitates undue reliance on a primary narrative.

The underworld of 'descent' depicted in his work is consequently attributed with qualities which illustrate this dependency on a religious tradition.

Collins and du Maurier have also been shown to be heavily influenced by the Gothic literary tradition (particular emphasis has been placed in this respect on the Gothic genre's externalisation of the inner consciousness), yet, operating as they do largely beyond a framework of directly religious values, the outcomes of the literary progression in the present context have been different. This has been largely a result of the clear identification of two narrative levels. William Patrick Day responds to Frye's theory of 'descent' and 'ascent' in the romance narrative by stating that there is no 'ascent' possible in the Gothic fantasy, where the central identity must remain in the underworld, and his or her identity remain fragmented.²⁴³ Day nevertheless recognises the importance of the imagination in Gothic, in its social context as an escape from the real world for reader and writer, as well as within the text itself. He claims that Gothic institutes a critique of the romantic imagination by not presenting an alternative through it. The Gothic, then, according to Day,

does not offer a vision of imaginative transcendence, nor does it suggest that imagination is capable of the power of transcendence. The Gothic imagination returns us to where we started with no final resolution, for resolutions lie, not in the imagination, but in the world in which the imagination functions.²⁴⁴

Having established the central texts examined in this thesis as broadly Gothic in nature, the present study, by adding the theme of writing to those themes already recognized by

²⁴³ *In Circles of Fear and Desire: A Study in Gothic Fantasy* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), p.7.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.192.

Frye as signalling the progression from 'descent' to 'ascent', has shown that a transcendence is indeed enacted in the narratives of Collins and du Maurier. This furthermore takes place by recourse to an 'imaginative transcendence'. By exploring the manner in which writing is represented in the work of these two writers, it has become clear that this is a theme strongly identified with the imaginative inner life, and with the transition into a new state of being, and consequently refers largely to the secondary level of the narrative involved with subjectivity. This 'ascent' is marked by the acquisition of control over writing, and the manipulation of it as a gateway into an imaginary dream-world in which a sense of creative liberty is experienced. An associated motif of reproduction upholds the success of this imaginary existence, while also making it specific to female identity.

Stevenson, in adhering to a religious framework, is unable to enact such an 'ascent' in his fiction, and in this respect remains grounded in the Gothic tradition as it is described by Day, and, within a structural narrative perspective, grounded on a primary narrative level. Collins and du Maurier, however, expand Frye's theory as well as Day's by showing a liberation from the restrictions of the underworld made possible through imagination, or fantasy, on a secondary narrative level. Thus, while Day claims that a state of 'descent' is predominant, the present study shows that it is the stage of secondary narrative 'ascent' that is given a central position within the narrative structure. It has been demonstrated that the critique instituted through this narrative level by the authors is therefore of great importance in illustrating that personal wholeness and liberty can only be achieved by a recognition and rejection of the false values of the primary narrative, and a re-interpretation of truth.

The literature of the double is, as Astrid Schmid has pointed out, primarily masculine in its traditional form, and the fiction of Stevenson conforms to this aspect,

although it does, as demonstrated, acknowledge the "feminine" nature of Otherness. The persistent conflict between the liberty and the restriction of the Self which is enacted through the motif of the double is formulated around the nucleus of the author's own relationship with his father, and encompasses issues of religion and patriarchy. These become the natural opposers of 'the life of the senses' which denotes integration and wholeness of the Self for Stevenson. The author's inability to dissociate his fiction from the values of his upbringing determines that the narratives remain fixed in an underworld of 'descent'; this is indeed signalled by the increasing focus on Edinburgh as the site of this "civilised" life oppressing the Self.

While Stevenson's literature of the double encompasses both a socio-political and a personal dimension, that of Collins and du Maurier largely limits itself to only one of these. It is indeed the social critique marking Collins' work which distinguishes the development of that aspect of the fiction of the double relevant to this thesis. The theme of writing has been shown to play an important role in effecting an 'ascent' on a secondary narrative level, and giving a voice to the "imprisoned" central female or "feminised" identity. In this manner, the two narrative levels often function in a parallel fashion, the (usually) female character's inner development parodying and to a large extent replacing the male hero's journey to knowledge or triumph. The primary narrative is depicted by Collins as reaching fruition in its traditional form, usually in a romantic conquest and marital union, a *dénouement* that signals the hero's 'ascent'. This conclusion, however, is detrimental to the central female identity, once more severing the Self from the Other, and eliminating a sense of wholeness. Thus a central female identity is often reduced, as in the case of Marian Halcombe or Magdalen Vanstone (in *The Woman in White* and *No Name* respectively), by a deforming illness. In each case, this makes way for the conventional heroine-figure of the primary narrative, in these

instances Laura and the radically altered and chastened Magdalen. Such a conclusion of events is nevertheless unbalanced by those values which have been purposefully constructed throughout the course of the narrative, where the focus had been placed on the central female consciousness. Both texts suggest the falseness of this conventional ending, and indicate that it constitutes a second 'descent' for the female identity. A new narrative progression has thus been identified that relates specifically to the secondary narrative level, and that formulates a critique of primary narrative values.

Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* reverses the traditional sequence of events yet further, exploiting the course of the expected romance narrative progression and exposing its values as false. This is achieved to a large extent by the extreme subjectivity of the first person narrative, whereby the nameless narrator's inner development is charted. It is through the subjectivity of this narrative that the Other is integrated into the Self, and wholeness is attained through an 'ascent' on a secondary narrative level. The textual "dream-world", one whose existence is supported by several references to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, is presented as particular to the female imagination. A shift away from this state is accordingly anticipated by the legal inquest that takes place, an echo of Collins' use of the law in *The Woman in White*. Here, du Maurier again inverts the strategy of traditional romance narrative, for the suspicion of murder that falls on Maxim is not a false one, and his liberty is only enabled by the defamation of Rebecca's identity. The failure of the socio-moral perspective of the primary narrative is exploited at this stage. Although a re-establishment of the pre-existing order is achieved, the narrator's acknowledgment of the inner life, an alternative existence symbolised by Manderley, presents a conclusion that is more optimistic than Collins', and in which the flight of fancy, or "phantasying", functions as a "scapegoat" in its capacity to heal.

In a large selection of both Collins' and du Maurier's fiction, including *The Woman in White* and *Rebecca*, the 'ascent' into wholeness of the central identity within the secondary narrative is partially or wholly revoked by a subsequent 'descent'. Within this scheme, Marian Halcombe's physical weakness and the second Mrs de Winter's house-bound exile function as a form of the paralysis that is a trait of the narrative underworld. This has furthermore been shown to be concomitant with the hero's 'ascent' within the primary narrative. The return to a state of restriction under the guise of a traditional happy ending has already been anticipated by the subversion of other themes associated with the course of narrative progression – notably that of a trial – to indicate a reworking of its dénouement. Importantly, the identification of a secondary narrative level has revealed the authors' desire to re-evaluate the truths instituted by the primary narrative. The detachment from such values is represented by the secondary narrative 'ascent', which, even though it is ultimately revoked, expands the function of the motif of the double.

The present study has shown that, through an analysis of the function of the double in the given texts in relation to the theory of romance narrative structure already discussed, the existence of a secondary narrative level has been revealed, and its role assessed. This has necessitated a reinterpretation of narrative events, for the presence and purpose of the secondary narrative level has undercut the role of its counterpart. New insight has also been gained into the impact and relationship of certain aspects of the authors' lives on their art. By both drawing on and altering the course of the romance narrative structure (in the case of Collins and du Maurier, this is a more radical alteration), these writers have been furthermore shown to bring into focus their own concerns and anxieties, as depicted through the double. While the present study has

related itself to existing criticism on the subject of the double – in particular Otto Rank's identification of the 'eccentricity' of authors whose work centres around a representation of the double, Karl Miller's theory of the 'flight' of the orphan as double, and Clifford Hallam's observation that the double is an 'Incomplete Self' seeking 'integration'²⁴⁵ – it has also expanded an understanding of the function of the motif, enhancing the perception of narrative, narrative structure, and character development in the fiction of Stevenson, Collins, and du Maurier.

The nature of the present thesis, drawing as it does on a variety of sources, renders it a suitable basis for further study. The development of the motif of the double – and in particular of the female double – that is signalled by the work of Collins and du Maurier presents one such possibility for future assessment. The significance of the theme for later fiction relying on the Gothic mode, as well as an increased focus on the role of psychoanalysis within this context, are also relevant areas for future research.

²⁴⁵ *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*, translated and edited with an introduction by Harry Tucker, Jr. (London: H. Karnac, 1989), p.35; *Doubles: Studies in Literary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.48; 'The Double as Incomplete Self: Toward a Definition of Doppelgänger', in *Fearful Symmetry: Doubling in Literature and Film*, Papers from the Fifth Annual Florida State University Conference on Literature and Film, ed. E. J. Crook (Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1981), p.4.

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